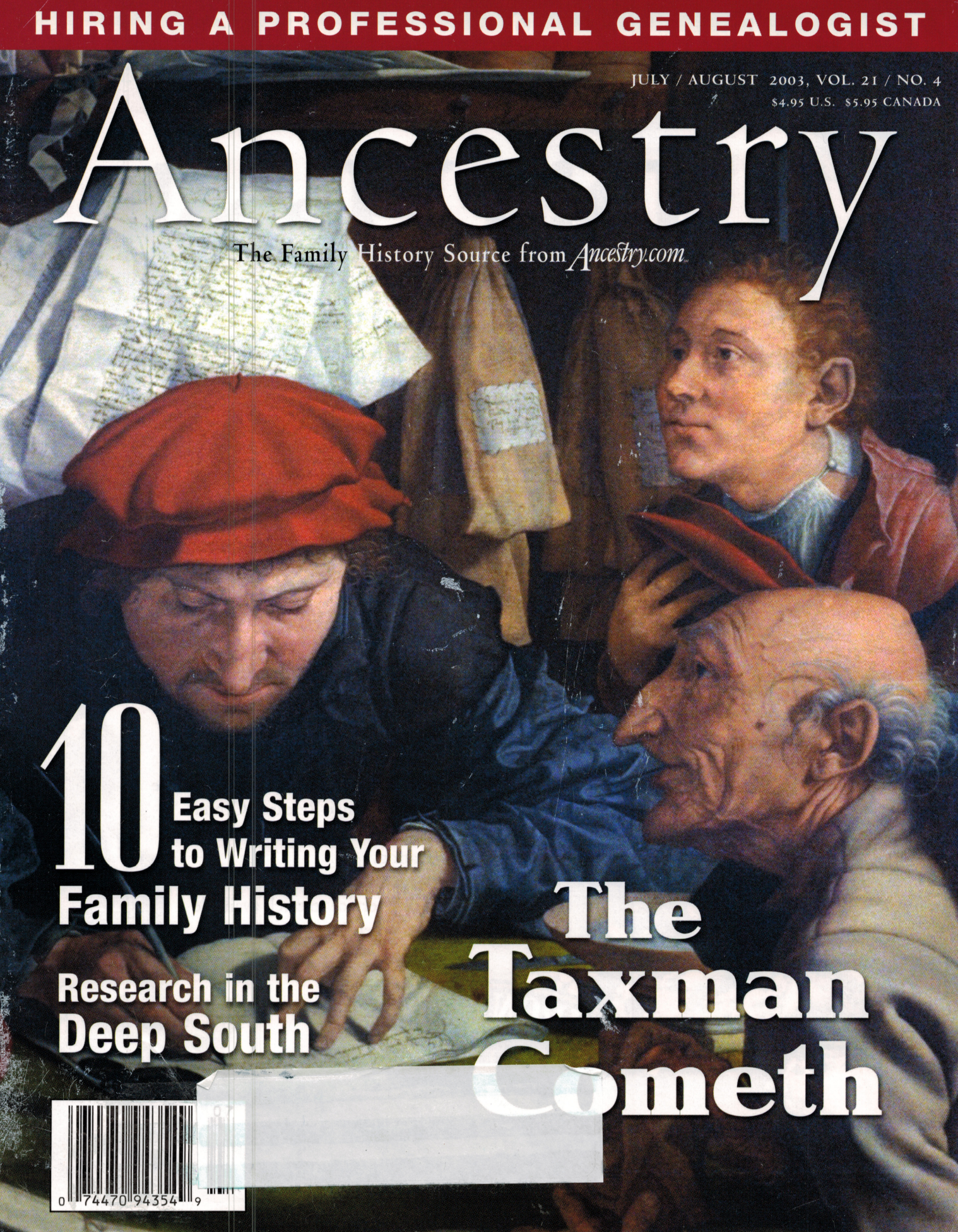
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by Loretta Evans, AG



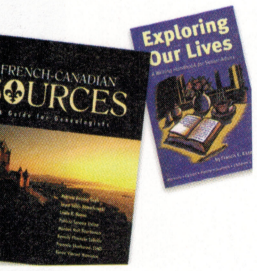
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Editor's Note



Scrapbook material has a remarkable way of capturing time, place, culture, and most of all, the personalities of the people involved.

Only a few pages from my grandmother's scrapbook survive, but those remnants provide a glimpse of a young woman in the 1890s. I can only wonder why she saved a small blue ticket for the "New York & Brooklyn Bridge Promenade," but it's easier to see why she kept a photo post card of herself with a happy-looking group at Coney Island. Eight tintypes on a page, still firmly glued to gray paper, show her dressed up and stiffly posed with several unidentified people. On another, she's outside standing by a huge American flag and a cloth-covered table with flowers and food. Among the other items that made it through the years are two invitations. One was for a sleigh ride to take place 7 February 1895; the other was for a dance and was addressed to her in my grandfather's distinctive handwriting. My grandfather said that the dance invitation was a keepsake of their first date. I look at the time-yellowed card now and wonder if it was a memento of the night they fell in love. I'll never know, but it's clear that memories in this book were the ones my grandmother chose to save.



My grandmother's scrapbook was left unfinished. She died of typhoid at the tender age of thirty-eight, leaving five children under the age of twelve. These pieces of her life were carefully preserved by my grandfather and found with his possessions when he died in his eighties.

Sadly, my mother never left us a scrapbook. She worked from the time she was a young girl and had to go back to work again when my father left her a widow with six children under the age of twelve. My grandfather took me to Texas to live with my mother's sister and her family when I was twenty-two months old. When I was eleven years old, my aunt and uncle took me back to New York to meet my mother and brothers and sisters for the first time. My aunt understood that the trip was to be something I'd savor for the rest of my life. To prepare for it, she bought me a red-covered scrapbook that I have to this day. A crushed seashell serving as a memento of my first trip to the ocean, a post card of the Statue of Liberty, a ticket stub from our visit to the Empire State Building, and fading photographs of my family dressed in 1950s garb are among the items that have been pressed between the pages all these years.

Recently, I found vacation scrapbooks that my daughters and I hadn't looked at since we put them together in the 1970s. We included post cards of places we passed through on our way to visit relatives. There are headlines clipped from a newspaper when Apollo 15 was making a lunar landing and of the traffic jam we got caught in with hippies who were heading to Woodstock. There's a photo of the Partridge Family as well as photographs of our heavily packed panel station wagon and of cousins, aunts, and uncles my girls were meeting for the first time.

As family historians, we're usually very good at documenting lives with censuses, vitals, and all manner of records because they give us a foundation on which we can build. Yet often we forget the importance of "scrapbook material." Even if we don't have the time, the inclination, or the resources to create a masterpiece, we can at least gather and preserve bits and pieces of the world that surrounded our ancestors. Historical newspapers, local histories, and old photo collections are just some of the many ways in which we can breathe life into the people in our family histories.

Loretto D. Szucs

Loretto (Lou) Dennis Szucs
Executive Editor
lszucs@ancestry.com

From Our Readers

Processing Post-Castle Garden Immigrants

In Barry Moreno's article on Castle Garden in the March/April 2003 issue of *Ancestry* Magazine, he says that Castle Garden operated from 3 August 1855 to 18 April 1890 and Ellis Island from 1892 to 1954. Where would my paternal grandparents have been processed when they arrived in 1891?

Ed Kelly

After the abrupt closing of Castle Garden, the federal government assumed control of immigration processing, but had not yet finished constructing suitable buildings on Ellis Island. The solution was to transfer processing temporarily to the U.S. Customs building at Battery Park, known as the Barge Office. All immigrants that arrived at New York from 19 April 1890 through 31 December 1891 were processing by federal inspectors at the Barge Office.

Barry Moreno

Correction:
In the case study, Finding Mary, by Pamela Meyers that ran in the March/April 2003 issue of *Ancestry*, the story is centered in Springfield, Ohio, and the name of the cemetery is Ferncliff. *—eds*

Public Access to INS Microfilms

Joseph Silinonte's article in the May/June 2003 issue of *Ancestry* states, "Early registrations are on microfilm at INS (July 1940 to April 1944, including A-numbers below 12,000,000), and are searchable by name, date of birth, and place of birth."

Where can the public view these microfilms? City, street address, etc. Must everybody always go through the FOIA routine to view any of these records? Are these indexes?

Phil Quittman

The Alien Registration Forms (AR-2) on microfilm date from August 1940 to about April 1944 and cover A-numbers below 5.5 million. The registration records are not an index. Rather, they are arranged numerically by Alien Registration number.

The agency (that was INS) locates Alien Registration forms by searching various indexes to locate the Alien Registration number. It is these indexes that are searchable by name, date of birth, and place of birth, and that index many different kinds of records beyond Alien Registration microfilm.

The Alien Registration records on microfilm (or later A-Files) are not open to the public. Current rules require that they must be requested under Freedom of Information or Privacy Act guidelines. Nor can the indexes be opened to public searching, as they include information on persons born as recently as thirty years ago.

Marian L. Smith
I&N Historian
Bureau of Immigration and Customs Enforcement
Department of Homeland Security

Readers' Voices

What are your best tips for writing a family history?

FTM Help

When I write a family history, I like to use the Genealogy Report function of my *Family Tree Maker* software to generate a structure and a timeline of events in each family member's life. I then "fill in the blanks," adding events and details not covered by the software. I also insert stories, photos, and family memories in the form of quotes to round it out and make it a more complete family history.

Robert Jones
Brooklyn, New York

Getting Beyond Two Dimensions

What man or woman is capable of accurately saying what others think of him or her? By tapping into the rich wells of resources that are often available, a person writing a family history can also include information on the political, social, and economic make-up of the time. No man is an island. Rather every person is part of a greater whole to which they contribute. In my family history writing projects, I try to use as many sources as I can think of. Then I am able to better understand the people of whom I am writing and free them from a two-dimensional confinement.

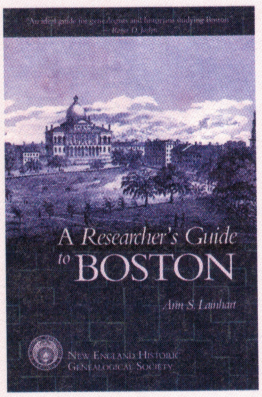
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Pocatello, Idaho

Readers' Voices Question

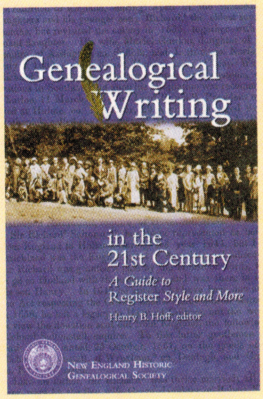
How did you get started researching your family history?

Please send your comments to Readers' Voices, c/o Ancestry Editor, 360 West 4800 North, Provo, UT 84604, or e-mail <editoram@ancestry.com>.

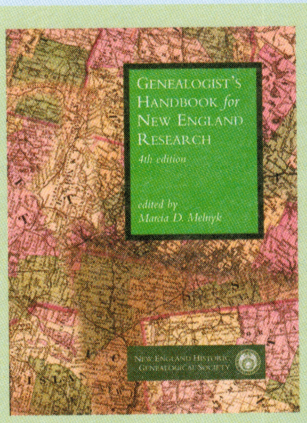
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A Researcher's Guide to Boston
Ann S. Lainhart
This book identifies where Boston's genealogical records are located, including probate, land, institutional, and vital records, seamen's papers, records of the poor, voter's lists, and city censuses. *Softcover. 176pp. $14.95.*

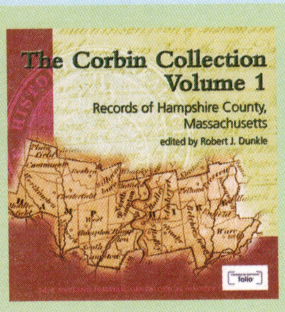


Genealogical Writing in the 21st Century: A Guide to *Register* Style and More
Henry B. Hoff, editor
This concise guide offers general advice about writing and style as well as writing for popular magazines, scholarly journals, websites, and books. *Softcover. 80pp. $17.95.*

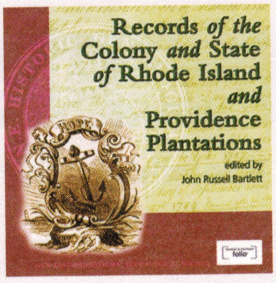


The Genealogist's Handbook for New England Research
Marcia D. Melnyk
This definitive guide describes what records exist for each New England state (CT, ME, MA, NH, RI, and VT) and where they can be located. *Softcover. 224pp. $19.95.*

NEW! The Great Migration: Immigrants to New England, 1634–1635, Volume III, G–H
Robert Charles Anderson, FASG. The latest volume in a series that aims to identify and describe all Europeans who settled in New England from 1620 to 1635. The series is widely acknowledged to be the definitive source for early New Englanders. *Hardcover. 712pp. $59.95.*



The Corbin Collection, Volume 1: Records of Hampshire County, Mass.
This collection of vital records, cemeteries, town histories, town records, and more is one of the most definitive sources for western Massachusetts anywhere. Until now this collection has only been available in manuscript and microfilm form. *CD-ROM. $54.99.*



Records of the Colony and State of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations
Originally published between 1856 and 1865 in ten volumes, these records date from Rhode Island's first settlement in 1636 until the end of the Revolutionary era in 1792. Includes information on early settlers, militiamen and soldiers, court petitioners, and more. *CD-ROM. $39.99.*



The Search For Missing Friends: Irish Immigrant Advertisements Placed in the *Boston Pilot* 1831–1920
An indispensable resource for those tracing Irish ancestors! Many ads contain references to townlands and parishes of origin in Ireland, dates and places of arrival in North America, and more. *CD-ROM. $69.99.*

Visit the premier site for New England genealogy — *www.NewEnglandAncestors.org*!

Shop online at ***www.NewEnglandAncestors.org***, or call toll-free **1-888-296-3447** (9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Eastern time, Monday through Friday). Shipping and handling charges apply. *All NEHGS CD-ROMs are both Macintosh and Windows compatible.*

FGS CONFERENCE 2003: COUNTDOWN TO DISCOVERY

The 2003 conference of the Federation of Genealogical Societies will be held at the Renaissance Orlando Resort at Seaworld in Orlando, Florida, 3–6 September 2003. It will be hosted by the Florida State Genealogical Society.

According to the FGS website, the conference "commemorates the spirit of our exploration in family history, both past and present, with its theme, 'Countdown to Discovery: A World of Hidden Treasures.' The conference will be perfectly situated in Orlando, Florida, a place that represents both the past and the present, from the centuries-old mission of St. Augustine to the Kennedy Space Center in Cape Canaveral. Located just a few miles apart, both are classic symbols of the rich heritage and future of American exploration and diversity."

The 2003 FGS conference will provide opportunities for all conference attendees to discover a broad range of genealogical research ideas and techniques. More than 175 lectures by many internationally known researchers, authors, and teachers will be taught during the four-day conference.

Register for the conference by 15 July and receive a discounted four-day rate of $159 or a single-date rate of $81. Register online at <www.fgs.org/2003conf/conf-order.asp>. For more information about the Florida State Genealogical Society and the upcoming conference, visit <www.rootsweb.com/~flsgs>. For more information about FGS, visit <www.fgs.org/2003conf > or e-mail fgs-office@fgs.org.

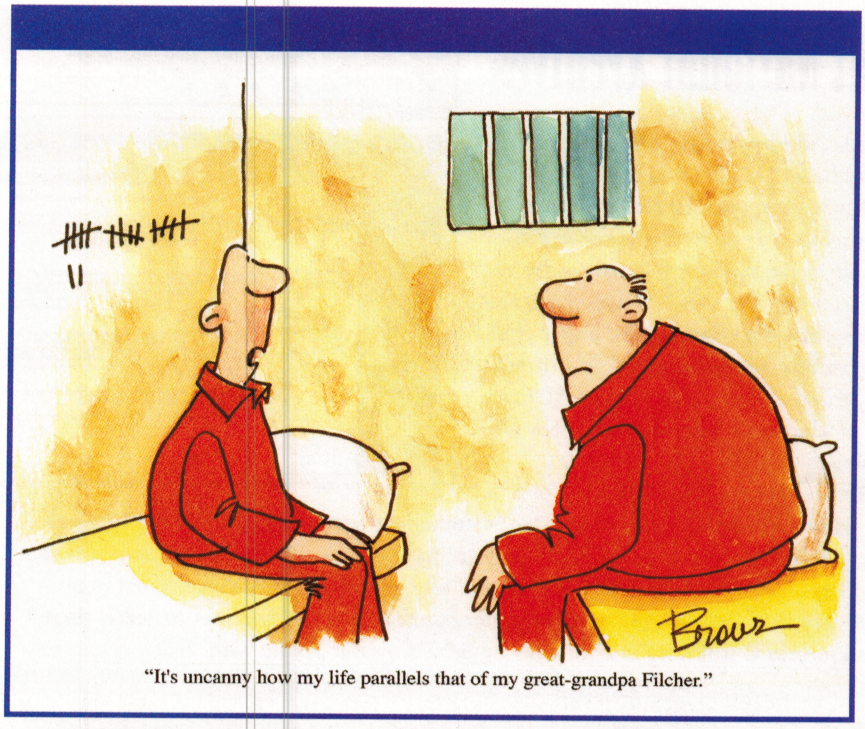


THE CHINESE IN CALIFORNIA

The Library of Congress has released a new online collection, "The Chinese in California, 1850–1925," which contains some 8,000 images and pages of primary source materials. Included in the online collection are photographs, letters, excerpts from diaries, business records, legal documents, broadsides, speeches, sheet music, and other printed materials pertaining to traditional Chinese life in California.

The collection can be searched by keyword, subject, group, or theme. Group topics include Collection of Chinese textbooks and San Francisco Early Views. Themes range from Chinese American Communities to San Francisco's Chinatown–Business and Politics.

Browse the collection at <http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/award99/cubhtml/cichome.html>.



"It's uncanny how my life parallels that of my great-grandpa Filcher."

Celebrate the Fourth of July at Union Station

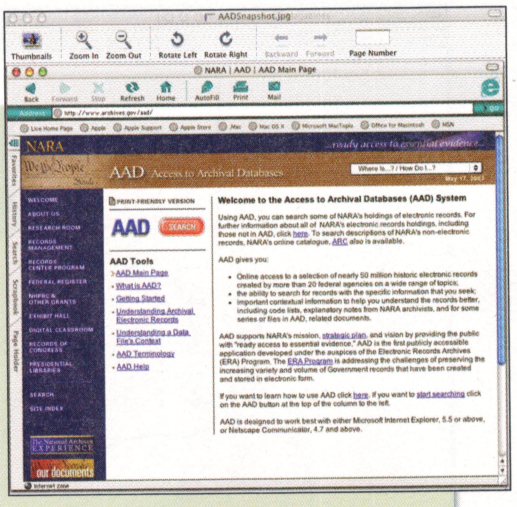
The National Archives will celebrate the 227th anniversary of the adoption of the Declaration of Independence with its traditional Fourth of July event. The theme of this year's annual program, which will be held at Union Station, is "Freedom's Journey, A National Archives 4th of July."

The day-long program includes patriotic music, a dramatic reading of the Declaration of Independence, and free family activities. Other highlights of the program include:

- National Archives specialists will demonstrate how to do genealogy research at the National Archives.
- The Capital Children's Museum will join the National Archives in various children's activities (making petitions, seal activities, guess the Presidents).
- History book fair and book signings for young and old alike.
- View popular patents that are among the holdings of the National Archives.
- National Archives conservators will host informal workshops on preservation of important family records and photographs.
- National History Day participants from across the country will present winning exhibits, performances, documentaries, and papers from their national contest in June.

Activities begin at 11:00 A.M. and will go through 5:00 P.M. on July 4. Union Station is located at 50 Massachusetts Avenue NW, Washington, D.C. Visit <www.archives.gov/media_desk/press_releases/nr03-30.html> for more information.

New Electronic Database at National Archives



The National Archives and Records Administration (NARA) recently launched Access to Archival Databases (AAD), a new research tool that makes a selection of the Archives' most popular electronic records available to the public over the Internet at <www.archives.gov/aad/>.

AAD is the first publicly accessible application developed under the auspices of the National Archives Electronic Records Archives Program. The Electronic Records Archives Program is addressing the larger challenges of preserving the increasing variety and volume of government records that have been created and stored in electronic form. AAD only addresses access to a specific type of electronic record—databases and records that are structured like databases.

In announcing the new system, Archivist of the United States, John W. Carlin said, "This groundbreaking system will provide a new way for customers to access records over the Internet. Until we launched AAD, researchers needed to contact us directly to gain access to our electronic records. Sometimes we were able to supply them with copies of specific records after a period of time, but frequently they needed to purchase a copy of the entire file. Now they only need access to a computer connected to the Internet to reach these selected records. AAD is a crucial step toward fulfilling our mission by providing the public with 'ready access to essential evidence.'"

FREETOWN VILLAGE

A GLIMPSE OF AFRICAN AMERICAN CULTURE

African American culture comes to life at Freetown Village, a living history museum in Indianapolis, Indiana. The museum is devoted to educating the public about African American lives and culture in post-Civil War Indiana through living history performances, the collection and preservation of artifacts, exhibits, and allied programs. Freetown Village is a symbolic community representing many of the predominantly African American settlements scattered throughout Indiana during the post-Civil War years.

The residents of Freetown Village are composite characters of the approximately 3,000 men, women, and children identified on the 1870 Indianapolis census. The geographical focus is in the old Fourth Ward, the oldest African American settlement in Indianapolis. In 1870, five years after the Civil War ended, towns grew and prospered. Many who were former slaves discovered a newfound freedom and control over their lives. African Americans could now be paid for their work, purchase land, attend school, be legally married, and not be separated because of slavery.

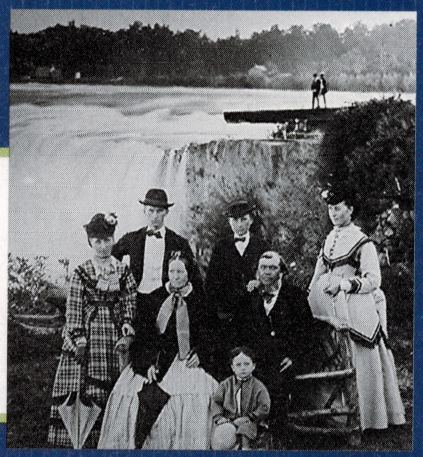
Freetown Village opened in 1985 and has been successful in fostering and promoting understanding and respect for the history of African American culture and its contributions to society. Learn more about Freetown Village at <www.freetown.org/>.

Photo Corner



My father, T.H. Alexander Jr., and his older brother, Dave Alexander, are standing in front of their drink stand on Granny White Pike in Nashville, Tennessee, in 1928. The boys' father, a columnist for *The Nashville Tennessean*, wrote a column about the drink stand.

—submitted by Hudson Alexander



This photo was taken in 1869 at Niagara Falls, Ontario, Canada. The seated couple are James and Margaret Bampfield with their children Mary, James Jr., Charles, and Anna. Kneeling in front is four-year-old John Joseph Bampfield, my great-grandfather. The family lived in Niagara Falls and their home, built in 1860, still stands on Bampfield Street near River Road.

—submitted by James R. Bampfield

Would you like to see a favorite photo of your ancestors in *Ancestry*? Now you can submit your photos to Photo Corner. Submissions should include your name, contact information, date of photo, who is pictured, and a short description. Please do not submit a photo of living persons without their written consent. Mail a quality duplicate (no photocopies or originals) to *Ancestry* Magazine 360 West 4800 North, Provo, UT 84604, or e-mail a 300 DPI TIFF scan to <editoram@ancestry.com>. Submissions become the property of *Ancestry* Magazine. You will be contacted if your photo is chosen.

Book View

French-Canadian Sources: A Guide for Genealogists

by Patricia Keeney Geyh, Joyce Soltis Banachowski, Linda K. Boyea, Patricia Sarasin Ustine, Marilyn Holt Bourbonais, Beverly Ploenske LaBelle, Francele Sherburne, Karen Vincent Humiston. Ancestry Publishing, 2002. 340 pages. Hardcover. $39.95. Order at <www.ancestry.com>.

Comprehensive French-Canadian genealogy source books for English-speaking researchers are few and far between. Because much of the most valuable information available is in French, many non-French-speaking genealogists are at a real disadvantage. This book aims to assist those researchers by providing detailed explanations in English about the many primary and secondary sources available.

French-Canadian genealogy is not the same as other such research. The reasons for this difference are based on these three facts: First, women in French society do not lose their maiden names; in official records they are known by their maiden name. Second, an extraordinarily large percentage of French-Canadian records have been preserved. Third, since the middle 1800s the French Canadians have been carefully tracing their families back into France and also indexing a huge proportion of the primary records.

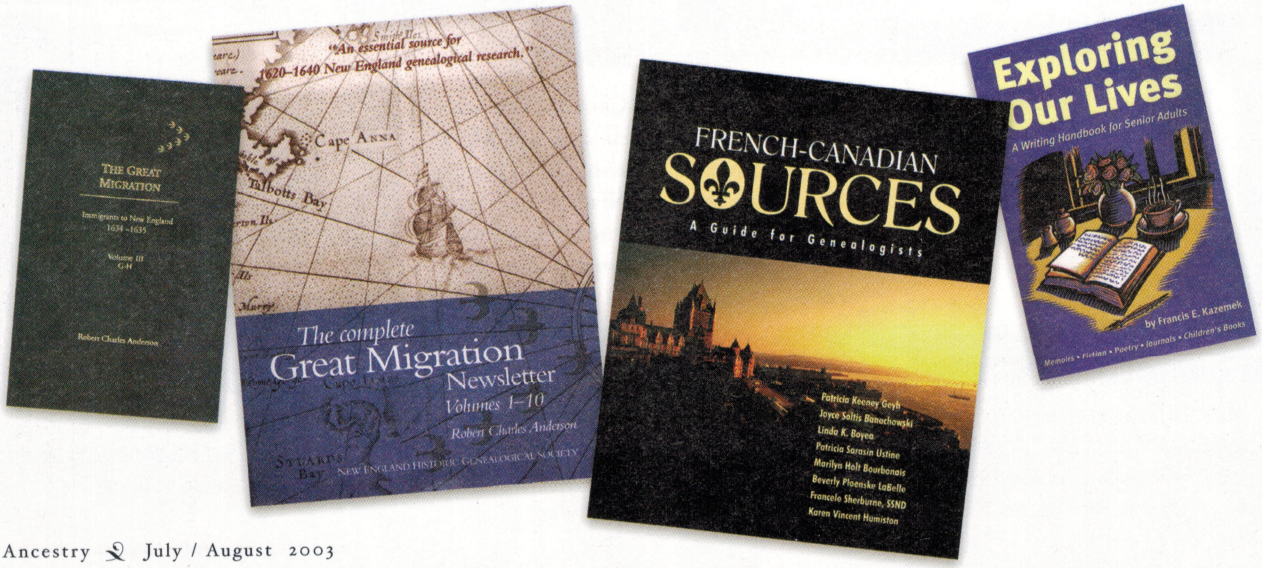
French-Canadian Sources: A Guide for Genealogists began as a series of articles relating to research that had appeared in the French-Canadian/Acadian Genealogists of Wisconsin's society *Quarterly* over a period of some fifteen years. Before publication, and over a period of six years, the authors added many new articles and brought previously published articles up-to-date. They organized the finished book in five sections: an introduction to French-Canadian research, a description and explanation of major secondary sources, a description and explanation of major primary sources, a section on more specialized areas of research, and appendixes.

Exploring Our Lives: A Writing Handbook for Senior Adults

by Francis E. Kazemek. Santa Monica Press, 2002. 309 pages. Softcover. $14.95. Order at <www.santamonicapress.com>.

Many senior adults would like to share their life experiences with family members through a personal history, but they are hesitant to begin such a daunting task. In *Exploring Our Lives*, Francis Kazemek assures would-be writers that everyone can write—all they need is interest.

Those who cannot decide what to write about will find many suggestions about topic selection, opportunities to practice selecting a topic, and examples from the author. Kazemek proves that there are numerous ways to record a personal history. Each chapter highlights a different method of writing, including poetry, short stories, fiction, and journal writing. Experimenting with these methods may convince writers to capture their thoughts in haiku, or to use photographs to help recall distant memories. The text also assists with fundamental writing concerns such as considering one's audience and fulfilling a specific purpose. The step-by-step instructions in this book make personal history writing a manageable undertaking.



The Great Migration: Immigrants to New England, 1634–1635, Vol. III

by Robert Charles Anderson. New England Historic Genealogical Society, 2003. 598 pages. Hardcover. $59.95. To order, call 1-888-296-3447 or visit <www.newenglandancestors.org>.

Between 1620 and 1643, about 20,000 European immigrants settled in New England. Although thousands of books and articles have been published about them, The Great Migration Study Project is the first comprehensive reference work that gathers all available information about these early immigrants.

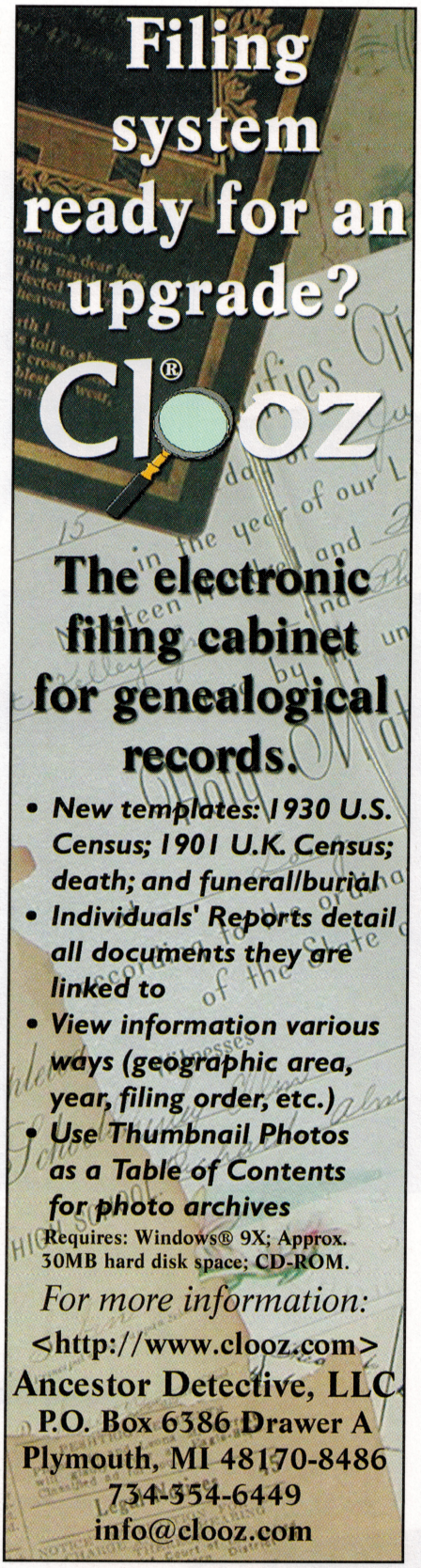
Robert Anderson's *The Great Migration Begins*, volumes 1–3, covered all recorded immigrants from 1620 through 1633. The second series of the Great Migration, *Immigrants to New England*, covers the years 1634–1635. In this two-year period, 1,300 individuals and families came to New England, representing 20 percent of the entire Great Migration. Volumes 1 and 2 for surnames from A-F have been published. Volume 3 covers surnames from G-H. Anderson and his researchers gathered biographical information (occupation, education, etc.), and genealogical data (birth, death, marriage, etc.), and immigration information, including additional details available and bibliographic notes on the most important published treatments of the immigrant and his or her family.

The Complete Great Migration Newsletter, Volumes 1–10

by Robert Charles Anderson. New England Historic Genealogical Society, 2002. 370 pages. Softcover. $19.95. To order, call 1-888-296-3447 or visit <www.newenglandancestors.org>.

When the Great Migration Study Project was begun, a quarterly newsletter was also begun. Its threefold purpose was to 1) relay information on the Great Migration Study Project as it progressed, 2) create a constituency for the project, and 3) generate additional funds to finance the project. Each newsletter followed the same format, containing an in-depth look at one of the Great Migration towns, a lead article dealing with a class of records (such as passenger lists and church records) or with a research strategy (documentation of marriages, deaths, etc.). Also included are summaries of published articles and books related to the Great Migration as well as a progress report by Robert Anderson, the project's director. An earlier publication of the compiled newsletters contained newsletters from the first five years; this publication includes the next twenty newsletters which appeared over the following five years.

For more family history books and products, visit <http://shops.ancestry.com>.




10

10 Easy Steps to Writing Your Family History

by Valerie Holladay

My father spent much of his early life in an orphanage. His mother died when he was six years old, and his father felt unable to care for his two sons during the Depression. Growing up without either parent, my father knew little of his background; consequently, he had little to pass on to his children. When my father retired and began investigating his family history, he found two extensive family histories, one representing his father's ancestors, the other his mother's. While perhaps not without some error, both of these have been helpful in identifying ancestors, locations, and sources to help my father and me in our research endeavors.

Illustration courtesy of Aasha Ramdeen

Growing up, I had heard rumors that my family was related to the founders of the nearby town of Holladay, Utah, but we knew nothing beyond that. I have since learned that John Daniel Holladay, my great-great-great-great-grandfather, settled the area in 1847. In the 1830s he owned a large plantation in Alabama and many slaves. According to people who knew him, "he was a good man to the poor people and was very good to his slaves when he was sober." Then he found religion, sold the plantation, freed the slaves, and came west—just in time to miss the Civil War, a fortuitous choice as it turns out. By 1851, his family had left Utah and settled in California, where John Daniel was also one of the early founders of the settlement of San Bernardino, a surprisingly diverse ethnic melting pot of Southerners and their former slaves, as well as Polynesians, Jews, Mexicans, and Indians.

Many aspects of John Daniel's life can be verified; others, my father and I have yet to document from original sources. While the author of the book about the Holladay family was a university professor and presumably a careful researcher, he wrote this book twenty years ago; new information may have been discovered to dispute some of his claims. At any rate, it's never wise to accept everything in print without substantiating it, and if you're going to pass it along to others, you'll want to make sure it's correct first.

> **Those who do not look upon themselves as a link connecting the past with the future do not perform their duty to the world.**
>
> **—Daniel Webster**

For my father, learning about his ancestors has, in a sense, given him the family roots he didn't have growing up. For me, learning about my father's family has helped me understand and better appreciate the choices made by my ancestors, choices that gave me the life I have now, with all its opportunities and privileges. Without the efforts of people who wrote these two books and others, my father's efforts to learn of his family could have been doomed to failure.

The opportunity to share the knowledge you have about your ancestors with other family members is a vital reason for writing a family history. When you feel ready to begin writing your family history, jot down a list of ancestors whose lives you feel are particularly worth recording, or begin with a list of stories you'd like to pass on. You might even write some brief biographical sketches or the family stories you grew up hearing. Using your pedigree chart as your outline, create a timeline to show the events of their lives or trace your ancestors' migrations on a map.

You don't have to have a Ph.D. to write your family history. The desire to put the story of your family in print is a good beginning place, coupled with a willingness to speak to as many living relatives as you can. Two more essential qualities of a serious family historian are the fortitude to sort through all the available records on your family, and a determination to weed out any claims that cannot be traced to an original source and cross referenced to other sources.

Deciding the Type of History to Write

A family history can take several shapes. It can be a chronological timeline of your ancestors' movements since their arrival in a new country, or a simple collection of pedigree charts and family group sheets with brief biographical sketches of as many individuals as you have done research on. It could even be a compilation of family stories (although documentation is still important). Below are some forms your family history could take.

Pedigree charts. While this option relays information, it isn't a lot of fun to read. You can begin with yourself and work backward, or begin with a specific ancestor and work toward the present day, using pedigree charts, family group sheets, or other forms. The various software programs offer lots of choices.

Memoir/narrative. A combination of story and personal experience can be very effective. One benefit of this form for the writer is that neither memoir nor narrative needs to be all-inclusive or objective. Also, many people find these forms the most enjoyable to read and to write.

Pictorial history. A collection of photos where people and events are identified is another fun way to tell your family's story. Place your photos in chronological order and add biographical sketches and descriptions of events to complement the pictures. You can also include images that reflect the family's life such as schools, homes, tombstones, churches, farms, businesses, etc. (This could be made into an electronic file or video to share with the family.)

Family profiles. Even without pictures, a collection of remembered stories about family members and ancestors is a valuable gift to your family. (For variety, set these profiles in newspaper or magazine style.)

Letters and diaries. You don't need to write everything yourself. Include the voices of your ancestors wherever possible through their letters and diaries. Depending on your end goal, a compilation of letters and diaries may be all you want to do.

Official documents and maps. Collect copies of documents such as wills, land grants, military records, court records, educational transcripts, copies or extracts from letters, or journals. Maps can be incorporated chronologically or they can be placed in their own section as appendixes.

Cookbook family history. Compile family recipes and intersperse them with family stories. This is especially effective when cooking and eating together are popular family traditions.

A combination of personal story, photos, and family trees. Most family histories fall into this category. The stories and photos combine to create an informative and enjoyable family history; the family trees provide information at a glance.

As you plan your approach to writing your family history, it may help to start gathering your research together—pedigree charts, photos, documents, transcripts of oral interviews, and so on. You'll be in a better position to decide what you want the final product to look like if

More Details for Your Family History

Describe the neighborhoods in which your ancestors lived. Collect or borrow any existing photos of the houses in which they lived; take photos of buildings that still exist.

Describe modes of transportation through the years. Include photos of horse and buggy, oxen teams, sleighs, streetcars, and old cars.

Describe sewing machines, milk separators, old typewriters, hand sickles, pitch forks, scrub boards, telegraph keys, telephone switchboards, lanterns, wooden buckets, player pianos, and stereoscopes. Tell the role they played in your ancestors' lives.

Describe your ancestors' religious practices. What songs did they sing? An old hymnal or prayer book may give some insight into their beliefs and traditions. Not only did religion often play a major role in the lives of our ancestors, it was also at times the motivating force behind the choice to emigrate. Certainly it was the reason for many helpful records you find.

Use old newspaper ads to give prices for foodstuffs and household items. Deeds, wills, and court cases also provide records to show the cost of certain items.

Include copies of obituaries from area newspapers as well as birth and death announcements.

Describe your ancestors' possessions. You may have inherited family writings or wills that mention possessions they valued: quilts, lamps, rocking chairs, grandfather clocks, jewelry, toys, books, and so on.

Include family stories and lore. Even if it can't be documented, a story that has circulated in the family may be included with an acknowledgment that it is part of the family lore and cannot be verified.

Learn about the creative abilities that run in your family. Look for singers, artists, teachers, writers, seamstresses and tailors in your family so family members can appreciate this particular gift of their heritage.

Research the kind of work your ancestor did and describe it. Factory work? Dairy farming? Merchant? Traveling salesman? Determine if the companies for which your ancestors worked have had histories written about them.

Suggested Reading

Daniel, Lois. *How to Write Your Own Life Story* (Chicago Review Press, 1997).

Dixon, Janice T. *Family-Focused: A Step-by-Step Guide to Writing Your Autobiography and Family History* (Mount Olympus, 1997).

Hatcher, Patricia Law, C.G. *Producing a Quality Family History* (Ancestry, 1996).

Kempthorne, Charley. *For All Time: A Complete Guide to Writing Your Family History* (Heinemann, 1996).

Lawrence P. Gouldrup, Ph.D. *Writing the Family Narrative* (Ancestry, 1987).

Neubauer, Joan R. *From Memories to Manuscripts: The Five-Step Method of Writing Your Life Story* (Ancestry, 1997).

Polking, Kirk. *Writing Family Histories and Memoirs* (Writers Digest Books, 1995).

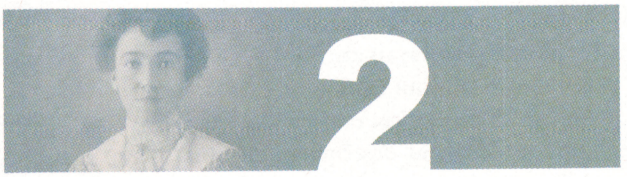
Stephenson, Lynda Rutledge. *The Complete Idiot's Guide to Writing Your Family History* (Alpha Books, 2000).

you've realistically considered what you have and what you still need. When you are ready to begin, these ten simple steps will take you through the entire writing process.



Begin by doing a little background study on any available family histories.

Go to your local library or historical society and see what family histories have been done and what form best fits your personality, writing style, and lifestyle. You will also want to investigate what's already been published on your family. No doubt you'll want to include some information that has been previously published, but keep in mind that your history should offer something new.



Recruit a family member to help you.

Is there someone else in your family who is interested in the family genealogy? Not only will a good partner cut your work load in half, but you can also keep each other motivated and on schedule. Or perhaps one of your friends is working on a family history. While you can't share the work, you can compare notes on successes and challenges. Remember: Your goal isn't the Pulitzer. You simply want a finished book that your family can read and enjoy and learn from. Make a commitment with your partner to meet on a weekly basis and discuss what you have done.



Give yourself deadlines to meet.

A deadline forces you to complete each stage of your project. Even if you have to scramble to meet a deadline and you don't feel your work is adequately polished, you can always go back to it and revise. You can also extend your deadlines when you need another day or so to finish a particular section. But don't do this too often or your deadlines will become meaningless.



Set boundaries on what to include.

What information do you include, and what do you leave out? Do you include that funny but possibly untrue story about Uncle George? How do you know when you're done? Early on in the process, you'll want to decide where to begin and what to include. It's better to limit yourself to fewer ancestors than try to take on the whole history of your family and do a poor job of it. You might begin with an immigrant ancestor or limit your family histories to one geographic region or surname.



Illustration courtesy of Megan Kimber

ADDING DETAIL TO YOUR NARRATIVE

by Patricia Law Hatcher, CG, FASG

When writing a family history set in the recent past, we often have more detail than we can include in the publication. But as we go back in time, the opposite is true. A typical family history can mention hundreds of individuals whose biographical entries can seem repetitive and boring. After all, how many interesting ways are there to say someone was born, was listed on the census, and bought a piece of land? An extensive family history will never be gripping reading, but we can do things to keep it from being monotonous. The ideas here cover both methods and sources.

VISUALIZE THEIR LANDSCAPE

If you have visited the ancestral home site, it may be relatively easy to describe your ancestors' environment, but if you've never been there, a bit of research is in order. "Mug books" (those county histories published in the latter nineteenth century) often had physical descriptions of the geography in the front of the book. Contact the local office of tourism for brochures and see if it has a website—you may be able to get a virtual tour. Judicious use of search terms may locate websites for businesses or individuals with local photographs. Websites for local hotels often have links to such pages also.

Deeds in metes-and-bounds states often have useful details in the land descriptions. If the deed in which your ancestor Adam sold land says "along the meanders of Blue Creek," you can sketch out the plat and say, "Blue Creek ran along the southeastern side of the property." If the deed says only "on the waters of Blue Creek," it is within the drainage area of Blue Creek, but you could safely say it was "near Blue Creek."

Pay attention to the trees mentioned as marking the corners, they are probably typical of the area: "Pines were a common tree" or "Hardwoods such as red oak and white oak grew in the area."

PLACE THEM ON THE MAP

Having found out about Blue Creek, it's time to dig out a map. (DeLorme topographic atlases and USGS quadrangle maps are great at this stage.) Focus on Blue Creek. What can you learn? What direction does it run? What does it drain into? How long is it? Help your reader visualize: "Blue Creek, in the northwest corner of the county, runs from south to north for ten miles as the crow flies, draining into Big Blue River."

What does the topographical map tell you about the land? "The area is hilly and tree-covered and probably required extensive clearing to grow crops." Note that since you don't know if the land had been cleared previous to the purchase, you don't say that your ancestor cleared the land, and you cautiously slip in "probably."

You may not want to give this much time and attention to all persons in your family history, but it's quick and easy to add a bit of detail elsewhere. Suppose Adam's brother Benjamin bought land on Brown Creek: "Benjamin bought land on Brown Creek, a considerable distance west of his brother Adam's tracts on Blue Creek."

READ THEIR NEWSPAPER

Your ancestral family didn't spend all of their time in the fields. Those who could read may have gotten a newspaper; those who couldn't listened as others read the interesting items aloud. Many newspapers are available on microfilm. Don't just look for ancestral names. Read the entire paper just as your ancestors did.

Was the paper a daily or a weekly? Was it published in the ancestral town or further away? Were there illustrated ads or was advertising "want-ad" style? You have seen the newspaper, but your readers haven't, so describe it for them. Was the item about your great-great-grandparents' wedding part of the news from the small town where they resided? "Nellie Nosey, the Smallville agent for the *Clarion*, the weekly newspaper of the county seat, Capitol City, reported that 'Everyone rejoiced at the wedding last Saturday of Minnie Myers and Robert Ryan in the living room of her parents' home. Music was provided by the Simmons sisters.'"

Remember that you want to personalize your family history as much as possible. You could add "Susan and Sarah Simmons were cousins of Minnie on her mother's side." You won't want to comment on their singing ability unless you found from reading many issues of the newspaper that "they frequently sang at the Wesley Methodist Church." You don't have any details about the wedding per se, but you've made the reader feel that he or she knows the people involved.

USE SIDEBARS

As you read magazines, you may notice that there are often sections that are related to an article, but aren't part of the flow of the article. These are called sidebars. (In fact, you'll notice that this article is appearing as a sidebar in the feature story "10 Easy Steps to Writing Your Family History.") Consider using sidebars in your family history for items that aren't connected to any specific individual or that are connected to many individuals. Items from newspapers are perfect candidates. Sidebars in magazines often have a shaded background. In your family narrative, the easiest thing to do is to give them a whole page with a simple border and place it near the family members most closely associated with the article.

What kind of items might you put in a sidebar? Weather is always a safe topic. Hurricanes, blizzards, and droughts affected everyone in the area. Tornadoes would have caused quite a stir. Those people whose farms weren't hit would nonetheless be talking for days about the piece of straw that was blown right through an egg on the Smith farm. (At this point it should be mentioned that newspapers often contained apocryphal stories, hence our cautious introduction: "The big event of the summer of 1915 for the family—other than the wedding of Minnie and Robert—was surely the tornado. This story appeared two days later in the weekly *Clarion*.")

PROVIDE CHRONOLOGICAL CONTEXT

It is fairly easy to find historical timelines. What is difficult is determining if the events truly relate to your ancestor. As family historians, we walk a fine line between understanding our ancestors and assigning them emotions and experiences we don't know for sure that they had.

You can accomplish a variety of things by creating a county-wide timeline in a sidebar, independent of reference to any specific person. Items to consider including are national events such as presidential elections (don't forget to mention the loser since your ancestors may have voted for him!), military events (especially local connections—the day the local troops departed had a bigger impact than the day Fort Sumter was fired on), geopolitical events (this is a great place to note when Newton County was formed from Oldham County), dates of local importance (e.g., the first burial in the neighborhood cemetery, the first sermon in the Methodist church, and laying the cornerstone at the new courthouse).

In addition to local history books, historical markers are a good source for such information. Try the Internet for the state historical commission. Texas, for example, has an online database of its historical markers, including the full text of each.

PUT THEM TO WORK

Censuses, deeds, and tax lists are good sources for learning an ancestor's occupation. To learn more about that occupation, search the Internet, visit the juvenile section at your local library (schoolchildren often have to write reports on that type of thing), and the local college library, which is more apt to have books on social history. Don't neglect periodicals.

It takes some extra effort to add detail to family narrative, but there is a side benefit. You will, as a result, learn more about the lives of your ancestors.

FURNISH THEIR HOME

One of the best ways to get in touch with an ancestor is to understand exactly what he or she owned. If there was a probate inventory, then you know exactly what was owned, down to every dish and every tool. Often the order of the items is room by room. It is amazing how few dishes and utensils a large family had. Visualize and describe the kitchen, the living room, the barn.

You will find many terms that are not familiar to you. Use a good dictionary, books from the juvenile section at the library, and the Internet to learn what these items are, what they looked like, and—important for the detail you're seeking—how they were used.

If the inventory names books other than a Bible, try to learn what the book was about and share that with your readers.

Patricia Law Hatcher, CG, FASG, is the author of Producing a Quality Family History *and* Locating Your Roots—Discover Your Ancestors Using Land Records. *She is also a frequent columnist for* Ancestry Daily News.



Get organized.

Establish a system to organize your material (e.g., folders, three-ring binders, etc.). Will each family get its own binder or folder? Or will you organize your work according to different geographic locations, records, etc.? If you plan to use letters, diaries, photos, and other family histories, gather them together as well. Use your timelines (see #6 below) to plan what visuals you want to include in your family history, such as photos, maps, pedigrees, even the timeline itself.



Follow a timeline.

Make a timeline for each ancestor you plan to include. This will provide an outline for your writing. Use dates and locations as a framework, then fill in additional events in your ancestor's life. Include world or regional events like the Great Depression, World War II, or the invention of the automobile, if any of these had an impact on your ancestor's life.



Fill in the blanks.

At some point you will need to switch your focus from gathering information to writing it down. Although extra information that you want to include may appear, if you keep gathering details to flesh out your story, you will never get to the writing. (This is where deadlines and writing buddies can help.)

If you're missing some information, it's okay to leave a blank and keep searching for an answer. If you suspect something about your ancestor to be true and pertinent, give your reasons for believing it. If you don't know where else to look, acknowledge the fact and keep going. One of my ancestors left no known written record and we know very little about her life as an immigrant settler in the New World. However, she and her husband traveled from place to place with her husband's siblings, who did leave written records, so I have some idea of what her life was like.



Keep your source list updated as you move forward; don't put off doing it until the end.

It is much easier to document as you go than to try to find your sources when your family history is completed. Make sure that your information can be documented completely, or in cases where you are relating an undocumented family story for interest, be sure to acknowledge this. Remember: family history without documentation is merely mythology.

It is too bad that a requirement for living is not leaving a record of it.

—Lynda Rutledge Stephenson





Prepare a detailed index.

Indexes may not be popular with writers, but they are a researcher's best friend. Since you are writing your history to benefit others, give them an excellent index to rely on to find the information they are looking for. Generally speaking, an index will contain most if not all proper nouns (people, places, and things with names) and some common nouns as well. Remember to include the married and maiden names of the female family members discussed in the history.

Ask family members to review copies and offer comments and corrections.

Before taking your completed family history straight to the press so you can have it in time for your family reunion, stop! Once it is in print, you'll have to sell out that first printing before you can make corrections and do a second printing. Now is the time to have several copies made (a simple spiral binding will keep the sheets together) and have others read it. They may have conflicting information



Illustration courtesy of Nadyne Ikbal

ILLUSTRATING THE LIFE OF A CAMERA-SHY ANCESTOR

by Loretta Evans, AG

Anyone who has written a family history has the fear that although the book is a great, well-documented biography of their ancestor, it will sit on library shelves and never be read. One way to get people interested in a family history is to include illustrations.

When writing about someone who lived recently, the job of illustrating a history is a matter of sorting through the boxes of photographs to find pictures that best tell the story. A different problem comes when the biography is about someone who lived long ago, and no photographs or drawings of him or her have been found.

One approach to finding illustrations is to look for anything existing today that was associated with the ancestor. Have any artifacts that belonged to the individual survived? A photograph of the gun or drafting tools he would have used could give the reader a feel for his life. Is any building associated with the ancestor still standing? Maybe her home was torn down to build a shopping mall, but the school or church she attended is still standing. Even if the building has been remodeled, a photograph could show enough of the original structure to give a feel for what it may have been like all those years ago. If no photograph of the ancestral home can be found, perhaps a picture of other homes from the same area can be located in the files of a local historical society or published in a county history. University libraries and archives are also excellent sources.

If no artifacts or buildings survive, pictures of items that were typical of the time make excellent substitutes. For example, if the probate inventory of an ancestor mentions a cast-iron cooking stove, a picture from the Sears-Roebuck catalog from the same era could be used.

Newspapers and magazines from the time make great illustrations. An advertisement for clothing or groceries gives an idea of what was popular and what prices of the day were. Headlines reveal the political climate of the day. Announcements of plays, concerts, and

or additional perspectives to add to your family's story. A good proofreader will also catch those little typos that always manage to sneak in.

How fortunate it was for my father that when he was ready to start looking for his ancestors, he found the family histories that others had so carefully researched and written. Not only did my father learn about his father's ancestors, he also learned about his mother's family in another family history. This was especially meaningful since he had had no contact with his mother's family since her death when he was six years old.

Writing your family history is a gift like no other. It won't get broken, thrown away, or replaced by a more expensive toy. It actually increases in value over the years rather than depreciates. It is one that can be enjoyed by many people simultaneously. And if it isn't used or appreciated right away, it will still be there when the recipient is ready for it. After all, it took my father fifty years before he was ready to learn more about the family he had enjoyed for barely six years. Take the time to prepare your family history. It is truly the gift that keeps on giving.

Valerie Holladay, a contributing editor of Ancestry *Magazine, began writing stories about her family fifteen years ago after taking a family history writing course during graduate school.*

lectures can show what the ancestor may have enjoyed for entertainment.

Knowing an ancestor's profession can lead to new possibilities for illustrations. If he raised potatoes in Idaho in 1910, the Idaho State Historical Society will have photographs of early potato farming. Even if the pictures are not of his farm, they will give the book a feel for what his life was like.

Maps can also add a lot to a family history. Plat maps show the owners of each piece of land. A plat map in a biography could show the ancestor's farm and those of other nearby relatives or friends. Many county historical societies have preserved such maps.

City directories are good sources for historical urban maps. They also give the ancestor's home and business addresses. A letter to a Chamber of Commerce could yield a map of the city as it is today. Some writers take a map of the city, scan the image into their computer, and mark it to show where the ancestor lived and where his business was located. The addresses of other relatives or places of important events could be noted as well.

Documents associated with the family can be used in a biography. Besides birth, marriage, and death certificates, there are records of religious ceremonies, military pensions, wills, diaries, and letters. Original signatures can be found on many of these papers.

Whenever a document is written by hand, it may be easier to read if it is transcribed, and it is a big temptation to correct spelling, grammar, and punctuation when doing so. But editing a letter can mean losing a sense of the ancestor's personality. A true historian transcribes a document exactly as it was originally written.

The Internet can also be a source of pictures. Antique postcards are a hot item on Internet auction sites such as eBay. Many show scenes from small towns all over the United States. The U.S.GenWeb project at <www.usgenweb.com> is another good place to locate old photographs. Each state in the United States and each county in each state have websites devoted to genealogy. Many sites have places where photographs have been posted or where you can post a query. Similar websites for other countries are found at <www.worldgenweb.com>.

Remember that not everything on the Internet is free for the taking. The person who posted the picture should be sent an e-mail asking permission to include it in the life history. Even family photographs are protected by copyright. When using illustrations other than your own family photographs, it is necessary to cite where the photo came from. If it came from a book, the full bibliographical source should be cited in the family history. If the book is still under copyright, the author or publisher should be contacted for permission to use the illustration. If the picture is taken from the collection of a library or an archive, that organization will need to know how the picture will be used, and may require a fee to publish it.

Because websites change, the citation for an Internet source should include the URL and the date it was accessed. Most organizations and individuals will be glad to allow publication, especially if you include "used by permission of ..." in the credit line.

Well-illustrated family histories are not only more fun to read, they also give a more complete picture of your ancestor and his or her life. They will add just the right ingredient to intrigue even your least interested family member.

Loretta Evans, AG, specializes in the Midwestern United States. She is a freelance writer and lecturer with more than thirty years of research experience. Loretta serves as Public Relations Committee Chairman for the International Commission for the Accreditation of Genealogists.

Heritage scrapbooks bring together the visual images of photo albums with the stories of family history research. They are intended to preserve family pictures, documents, and mementos in a way that is archivally safe yet accessible.





Images in this article courtesy of Stampin' Up!®

by Connie Myers

THE LEGACY OF HERITAGE Scrapbooks

Our grandmothers kept memory books, heavy albums with black pages covered with mementos of events, newspaper clippings, and pictures of movie stars. Our grandmothers' photo albums looked much the same, with wavy-edged photographs placed carefully between photo corners on those ever-present black pages.

We've come a long way since Grandma's day. Today we're keeping our mementos and photos together in modern-day scrapbooks. Scrapbooking has become an industry unto itself. Paper companies, scrapbook stores, and conventions have grown up to serve this hobby. Our children will grow up with fully chronicled lives, from first tooth to first date. The myriad of products available at specialty, craft, and discount stores serve these scrapbooks well.

But what about Grandma's mementos? Her historical documents and pictures deserve special attention.

Why Scrapbooks?

Heritage scrapbooks bring together the visual images of photo albums with the stories of family history research. Heritage scrapbooks are intended to preserve family pictures, documents, and mementos in a way that is archivally safe yet accessible, so children can learn about Grandma without getting fingerprints on her wedding picture. The best heritage scrapbooks tell the story of a person or a family with photos,

documents, family trees, and journaling that bring our ancestors to life. Heritage scrapbooks make our ancestors interesting and accessible, honoring their lives and experiences.

Terry Chevako Bava's heritage scrapbook album grew out of her love of family history research. "I started scrapbooking purely to present my mountain of genealogical material in a viewer-friendly way," she says. "I was tired of seeing eyes glaze over as I excitedly told people I finally found Great-grandmother Decil Fields in the 1910 census or that Great-grandmother Rose Chevako is listed in the Ellis Island records as Hrisula Vozi." Terry's scrapbooks have made their ancestors more interesting to her family. "Now that I have scrapbook pages with photos, copies of census pages, pictures of ships, old maps and much more, it's a different story," she says. "Even distant family members are clamoring for more scrapbooked pages and are eager to share old letters, photos, and information."

Tenna Perry's heritage album began as a way to honor and understand her mother. After her mother's death, Tenna spent the days preceding the funeral sorting through endless boxes and drawers of unlabeled photos. "My goal was to produce a photo journal of her life," says Tenna. "I found old daguerreotypes and tintypes of her grand- and great-grandparents and cardboard-backed photos of her parents. I had a treasure trove of photos that covered Mother's life—from infancy, to photos of the pretty woman my father fell in love with at first sight in 1930, to family travels, to my parents' silver and golden anniversaries." As Tenna assembled the album of her mother's life, the family stories she'd always heard became real to her, gaining "a greater understanding of who and what my mother was as well as why she became the woman she did. During the two days of visitation and the funeral itself, that little project of mine made a great deal of difference in the thoughts of so many people. I don't know how many times a family member or friend would say, 'I remember this.'"



Safe and Secure

Archivists might say that the only way to fully preserve a document is to keep it filed away, dust-free, between sheets of archival paper, never to see the light of day. Practically speaking, this kind of preservation is rarely possible at home. And what good is Grandma's picture if her grandchildren never see it?

Archivists' main concerns are with exposure to temperature, light, dust, and the acid contained in many modern products. Glues, plastics, and newsprint contain acid that may spread to surrounding papers over time, weakening and destroying them. The worst culprit may be the magnetic photo albums so popular in the 1970s and 1980s. The adhesive in these albums can destroy photographs in a matter of a few years, causing discoloration, tearing, and separation of the layers of the photograph.

Many archivally safe products are available today to both safeguard and display mementos. Photos, postcards, and other paper items can be mounted with photo corners on acid-free cardstock, placed in dust-protecting acid-free sheet protectors, and stored away from sunlight in acid-free binders. All these products are designed with long-term safety in mind to help preserve mementos while keeping them accessible. If you're not sure of the safety of a product, use a pH pen to test for acidity. Acidic documents, such as newspaper clippings, may be best displayed as color copies. Even printer ink, computer paper, and the color ink used to print digital photographs may not be acid-free. Read the labels and test the products before using any of these items in your heritage scrapbook.

Journaling

Have you ever gone through Grandma's photo album and wondered who all those people were? Part of the family historian's job is to make that question easier for future generations to answer. Label every photograph with the answers to those old journalism questions: who, what, when, where, why, and how. Write around the borders of the reverse of the photograph, or write on a label and adhere it to the back of the picture.

But don't stop there. Scrapbookers know that the best scrapbooks include stories—lots of them. Next to that photograph, write up the story of Grandma's wedding. Copy



Archival Quality Materials

While the scrapbooker's artist side is happy to cut and paste and decorate, the scrapbooker's historian side wants to make sure the creation will last. A little attention to storage and materials will go a long way towards guaranteeing preservation.

"My greatest concern is the environment the artifact is in: stable temperature and humidity, limited light exposure, and proper handling," says Sarah Stauderman, preservation manager at the Smithsonian Institution Archives.

While temperature- and humidity-controlled museum environments are ideal for irreplaceable documents, such locales are not available to the average home historian. But don't despair. "For most of us, the places where we are comfortable—such as our living areas, as opposed to the attic or basement—are appropriate spaces for documents," Sarah says. "The most climate-controlled part of the house is the best space for your nineteenth-century letters."

As an archivist, Sarah is pleased with the scrapbooker's use of acid-free page protectors to protect memorabilia from the environment. "Enclosures will go a long way toward keeping something preserved by forming a micro-environment to buffer it from the outside environment," she says.

Sarah also warns of another environmental problem: exposure to dust. "Dust is acidic and also absorbs moisture from the air," she says. "Dust can be food for molds. We want to keep pages dust free." Sarah recommends placing scrapbooks inside slipcovers to protect the pages from dust.

Even though many products are labeled as acid-free, they may not be safe for your documents over the long term, Sarah cautions. "Avoid pressure-sensitive adhesives," she says. "Even if they're called acid-free, they don't stand the test of time and they're very difficult to reverse. Avoid any kind of tape. They tend to fail. Don't add anything to the artifact. Don't tape it. Anything you put on an older artifact should be passive. Photo corners are very useful." Sarah recommends testing products for acidity with a pH pen. Acidic papers can be neutralized with deacidification sprays.

Sarah recognizes that there may be a conflict between the need for acid-free materials and the need for the scrapbook creator's artistic expression. "I know people are incredibly creative and it becomes a collage," she says. "You want the album to last forever—that's the heritage part—but you also want to give a part of yourself." Sarah sees the myriad opportunities for self-expression in the scrapbooking trend and welcomes the creativity and art that will follow. "You clearly don't want to be using an inappropriate glue on an early twentieth-century photograph, because that's going to damage it," she says. "But I wouldn't tell someone not to include an award ribbon in the book along with the certificate just because the ribbon is three-dimensional. I'd never tell an artist that they can't use something if they have a vision."

lines from her diary. Include the receipt for her wedding dress. Tell where they went on their honeymoon and how they fixed a flat tire on the way. Details add more worth to both the photograph and to Grandma.

Sarah Stauderman, preservations manager at the Smithsonian Institution Archives, encourages home archivists to be just as careful to label their documents as she is at the Smithsonian. "People tend not to care for things if they are not identified," she says. "Things are more valuable if someone's gone to the trouble of identifying them."

Selecting a Format

Modern scrapbook albums are available in both bound and binder formats. Bound albums keep pages secure. Binder albums allow pages to be added or rearranged.

Scrapbooks generally come in two sizes: 12" x 12" or the standard 8 1/2" x 11". Each has its merits and proponents. "I chose to use a 12" x 12" album because I wanted to be able to put memorabilia on the pages as well as the photos," says Judith Perry, of Union City, California. A 12" x 12" album page allows for both the flat display of a large photograph or an 8 1/2" x 11" document as well as accompanying journaling to relate family stories.

Lorraine Hanley, of Jersey City, New Jersey, chose the 8 1/2" x 11" format for her grandmother's heritage album because she thought the smaller size would be easier for her aging grandmother to hold. But Lorraine found the smaller size offers another benefit: easy album duplication. "With the pages in the 8 1/2" x 11" format, I can scan them and reproduce them in my own home for other family members," Lorraine says. Page protectors and binders are also easier to find and less expensive in the standard 8 1/2" x 11" size.

Lorraine has gleaned a bonus from her scrapbook efforts. As she puts together pages and pictures, she asks her grandmother about the people and stories behind them. She's learning all kinds of new information about her family. "If I wasn't making this scrapbook, I would've never known that her Polish parish priest asked her why she wasn't marrying her 'own kind' when she and my Irish grandfather went to the church to announce their marital plans!" Lorraine says.

Putting It All Together

Shelli Gardner, president of arts and crafts company Stampin' Up!, decided to put together a heritage scrapbook after viewing an aunt's family history files. Shelli wanted to present her aunt's research in a way that would interest her own children in the lives of their ancestors.

Shelli made color copies of her aunt's documents and photographs. She chose the 12" x 12" format to take advantage of the extra room for journaling and some decorative embellishments. Shelli didn't want to have busy background paper or accessories compete with the simple black-and-white photos, so she kept to a simple color scheme. She used plain burgundy cardstock with accents of black ribbon and rubber-stamped images of black lace.

Like many scrapbook enthusiasts, Shelli loves sharing her newfound passion. She took her passion to work. Stampin' Up! added a line of archival-quality heritage paper and vellum to its scrapbook line.

Along with Stampin' Up!, many craft companies offer paper and accessories designed specifically for heritage scrapbooks. Colors and prints reflect specific eras such as Victorian or Civil War. Rubber stamps, stickers, buttons, lace, clip art—the variety is limitless.

Magnetic Photo Albums: Undoing the Damage

Those magnetic photo albums so popular in the 1970s and 1980s are among the worst places to keep cherished photographs. Magnetic or "self-stick" pages cause photos to yellow, fade, and separate, often irretrievably.

Removing photos from magnetic albums can be very difficult, but there are several tricks available to retrieve those pictures before it's too late.

Some pictures don't remove easily, so begin by making a color copy of the page. If the photos are damaged during removal, at least a copy will remain.

Joanna Campbell Slan, author of *Scrapbook Storytelling*, suggests using a hairdryer on a low setting to warm the self-stick page. "After a few minutes, test an edge of the plastic sheet or the photo to see if you have loosened the waxy film," she writes.

If that doesn't work, homemade tools may be in order. "Slide a piece of dental floss or the edge of an index card under the photos to lift them off the page," Joanna suggests.

Another option in using photos placed in magnetic albums is to have the negatives reprinted. The unstable color dyes used in the 1970s may have yellowed no matter how the picture was stored. Negative colors often remain true. Reprinting the pictures with modern processing and color dyes may reveal a whole new rainbow of 1970s colors.

Tricks of the Trade

Heritage scrapbooks can be not only practical but also beautiful. Old black and white photographs come to life when they are artistically arranged on pages of muted color and soft design. Creating a heritage scrapbook can bring out the hidden artist in even the most sedate family historian.

Many scrapbookers prefer to do their journaling by computer. But don't settle for Times New Roman. Choose a font to match the era of your scrapbook.

Some memorabilia are too large to fit on a scrapbook page. Consider photographing the item and scrapbooking the photograph instead of the original. Or scan the item and reduce the image to a usable size before printing.



What about "bumpy" mementos—the lock of Grandma's hair or the seashells she collected on her honeymoon? Clear memorabilia pockets mount right on the scrapbook page and will hold those unusual foreign coins or that beaded baby bracelet. But beware of the imprint these items may leave on a facing photograph. You may want to design a frame around either the pocket or the picture to protect the photo from damage. The same goes for many of the embellishments used in today's cute scrapbooks, such as eyelets, ribbons, twine, tags, and brads. Always be aware of the effect one page may have on the neighboring page.

Georgia Fleming, of Enterprise, Alabama, says she thinks of heritage scrapbooks as "art galleries on paper." Her album combines photographs with three-dimensional items such as her father's World War II ribbons and her great-grandmother's lace collar.

Filling in the Blanks

Some heritage scrapbookers find that their photo file is a bit scanty to document the lives of their ancestors. Consider adding song lyrics from popular tunes of the day; family recipes, especially if they're in Grandma's handwriting; pictures of family homes then and now, complete with addresses; records of military service or occupation and pay rates; and favorite pastimes.

Sherry Harris of Granada Hills, California, is creating a heritage album of her mother's life that goes well beyond photographs. "I'm also including information about the socio-economic world she lived in, such as toys she would have played with, the cost of things at various times, the music and news of the different decades," she says. "I believe all these things are important to who she was and how she lived."

As Peggy Santana, from Redding, California, began putting together her heritage albums, she found that photographs were scarce. She compensated by taking advantage of other resources. "I scan in graphics from old books and the Internet and print them on coordinated papers," she says. Peggy used handwritten memorabilia, such as a list of items purchased to set up housekeeping prior to her great-grandparents' wedding. "The list includes beautiful handwriting and the store heading," she says. The original list was disintegrating; Peggy's scan should preserve the document for another hundred years.

"Heritage scrapbooks are a great legacy to leave for my family," Peggy says. "I have done genealogy for twenty-five years and collect photos, documents, tapes and treasures. Memory books stir up past memories. I want my children to know where they came from."

Connie Myers is a freelance writer. Her feature writing has led to several guest spots on radio talk shows. Connie enjoys writing about her interests, which include family history, travel, cooking, and quilting.



The Taxman Cometh

In our ancestors' times, as today, the government found it necessary to finance its own activities and its social welfare obligations. It did so in the same manner as it does today–through annual taxation.

by Patricia Law Hatcher, CG, FASG

Finding Tax Records

Generally speaking, taxes were authorized at the colony or state level, but administered and collected at the local level. (In New England taxation was at the town level.) In many cases the detailed local tax lists were forwarded to the state as supporting documentation for the money collected. This is a boon to researchers who are working in counties with a record loss. Copies were also maintained at the county level. This gives you two opportunities to find the records. As is true with many genealogical records, one or both of the copies may have been destroyed, either deliberately because they were no longer needed or accidentally.

Tax lists for a single year are often published as substitutes for missing censuses, but what you hope to find in your research is a continuous run of tax lists so that you can follow your ancestral family over a long period of time. This means finding them in manuscript form, quite often microfilmed.

Tax records can begin early and continue into the twentieth century, but they don't survive for all localities. Fortunately, they are available for states such as Pennsylvania, Virginia, Kentucky, West Virginia, and Texas, where we face problems tracking migrating ancestors. Other areas have valuable lists, but for a limited time period, a limited locality, or a limited scope (such as only for landowners), they are generally spotty. Useful tax rolls survive for many localities, so don't assume that because your ancestor wasn't in one of the above states you won't find tax rolls. You just need to do some research on the records (see sidebar on page 32).

Collecting Taxes

The process through which the rolls were created and the assets recorded varied. The county court was usually responsible for assigning assessors and defining geographical districts when a county was too large for one man to oversee.

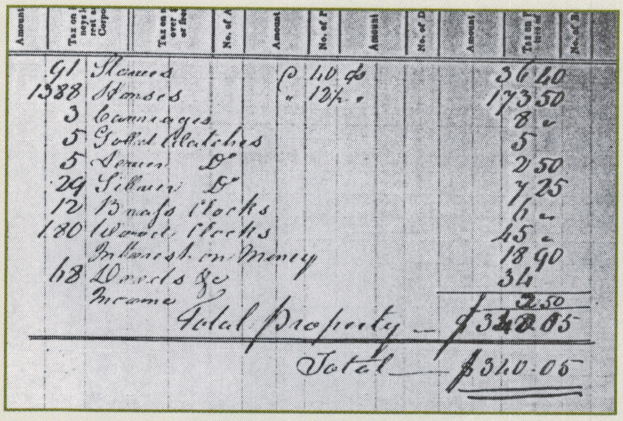
The assessor was usually someone familiar with the neighborhood, and he often continued taking that roll for many years, his handwriting becoming familiar to us as we read year after year.

The Tax Collector by Marinus van Roymerswaele. © Francis G. Mayer/CORBIS

Lists are generally semi-alphabetical, arranged by the first letter of the last name. Occasionally, we find a list that is semi-alphabetical by first letter of first name. It made sense to the assessor, but can be a bit annoying to the researcher who hopes to rush through the tax entries for an ancestral family. It is apparent through studying many rolls that the basic list was often prepared in advance, based on the previous year. In other words, names often appear in the same order from year to year, and new names are added to the end of the list for that letter of the alphabet. Sometimes the assessor went to the taxpayer; sometimes the taxpayer came to a central location; sometimes there was a combination of both.

Occasionally rolls list names in seemingly random order. This may be, like the census, representative of the visits made to each house. Be cautious, however, because if the taxpayer came into the courthouse square to declare his assets, then the order is not useful.

Different localities organized their lists differently. For example, Virginia separated lists for real property (land) from those for personal property, but Kentucky combined everything onto one list. Pennsylvania had the unique structure of dividing the list into three sublists: one for property owners, one for married renters (usually headed "Inmates"), and one for single men (often headed "Freemen"). Many lists have separate sections for delinquents, nonresident property owners, town dwellers, businesses, or special items such as business licenses. Entries for nonresidents may appear in the regular list under their name or the name of an overseer (no poll or tithe is counted for the owner). Technically, there were assessment lists and collection lists, but rarely do both survive.



The summary at the end gives a snapshot of possessions in the county. There were more wooden clocks than slaves in this county, and half of the tax revenue came from the tax on horses.

Assessments were posted for taxpayers to review, and there was usually an appeal process. For example, a Pennsylvania roll stated that "the Day of Appeal is the First day of October next at the house of Caspar Snevly in Lebanon." Appeals may be found in county court records, as when the Louisa County, Virginia, court orders note "Sheriff to remit to Thos. Almond his tax for the year 1785, he being under the age of twenty-one years."

Who Was Taxed?

In general, we find tithable lists, personal property lists, and real property lists. The first two lists were very often combined. A tithe was not, as we consider it today, a contribution of a percentage of income. The term meant, instead, adult white males and slaves. Later lists sometimes use the word "poll," which means "head." Sometimes a tax was levied on each tithe or poll, but often tithable lists were a means of keeping track of who was (or might potentially be) of an age for military service or road work, and no tax was assessed on a per-person basis. The exact ages for eligibility varied somewhat over time, usually beginning at sixteen, eighteen, or twenty-one (check the column headings on the first page of the tax roll). Men were often exempted from the poll tax as they became too old for productive labor (sometimes there was a cutoff age, sometimes the collector or court made the decision on an individual basis).

Unfortunately, the tax rolls we find are often for land tax. This is a selective list and excludes many adult males, whereas tithable and personal property lists are much more inclusive, showing even the poorest residents.

Almost everyone, regardless of age, was taxed on the property they owned, with occasional exemptions for clergy

Resources for Finding Tax Lists

- Use the online Family History Library Catalog at <www.familysearch.org>. Taxation is one of the headings in the Locality section. You will need to search at both the state and county level.
- Many tax rolls end up at state or regional archives, so check the website for the archives plus any books about research in the state.
- Individual tax lists are often abstracted in periodicals published by local genealogical societies. Use *PERSI* (the *PERiodical Source Index*) to find them. Taxes is a heading within the Locality section. Read the introduction in the article to learn where the records are so you can access all of the years. Hint: If you can't find anything on your county, try other counties. Those articles may educate you about tax lists for that state.
- If there is a tax roll published as a census substitute, read the introduction to learn where the tax rolls were obtained.

and officials. Thus, we even find women on tax rolls. This most often occurs after the death of a husband with property such as land and slaves. It may be very brief, only one year, probably during the time period when the estate was being settled and distributed. This is one reason you want to read every year that is available. Occasionally, widows or single women with taxable property appeared on the rolls for many years.

Tax lists were used for a variety of statistical purposes. One example of unexpected information collected on tax lists is from Kentucky, which wanted to know the number and value of sheep killed by dogs. And one nineteenth-century Pennsylvania list named those persons who were deaf. In this instance, they all appeared to be from one family, suggesting an inherited, congenital disorder.

Learning About the Family

The items for which our ancestors were taxed varied over the years, with a few items being dropped from the assessment, but more being added. In general, taxable property fell into one of the following classifications:

• **Land.** The acreage is usually given, often with additional information, such as the name of the waterway and land use (pasture, cultivated land, etc.). In public land states, the township, range, and section is listed; in towns, the lot number or size of the lot is provided. Eventually, buildings and improvements became subject to taxation.

• **Slaves.** Occasionally the names of slaves are listed. This may help those researching African American ancestry, but it is even more likely to help those researching the slave-owning family, as slaves were often inherited, allowing you to identify potential links between generations.



For localities in which there is a continuous run of tax rolls, we can determine birth order and approximate birth years of sons.

• **Livestock.** The year-by-year accounting of cattle, horses, mules, sheep, and hogs provides a picture of the ancestral farm and the changes it went through.

• **Income-producing items.** Tavern licenses, billiard tables, and stud fees (listed as "rate of covering") are examples of this.

• **Luxuries.** Watches and clocks were considered a luxury, as were certain kinds of carriages. A wagon, on the other hand, was an income-producing item as it could be hired out for cartage. Amount of cash or gold is found on some lists.

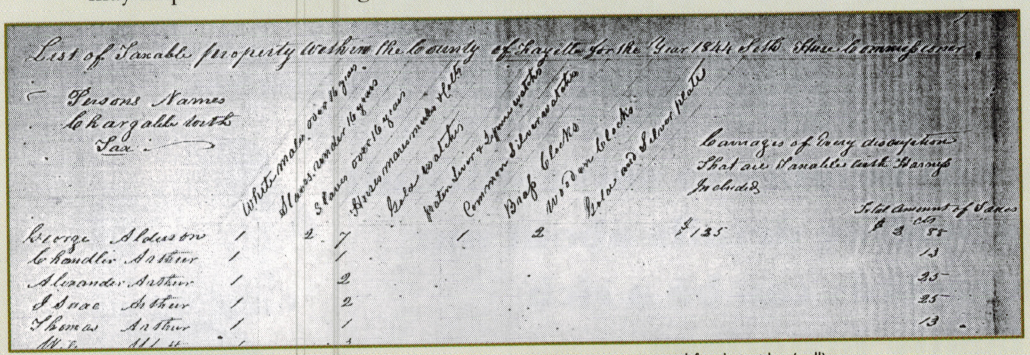
Thus we learn not only what our ancestor owned, but how that placed him in the community in which he resided. If your ancestor had one horse and two cows, don't assume he was poorer than his neighbors. Look at the other entries on the page. He might have been very typical.

Solving Research Problems

In many localities, a man was responsible for the taxes of those residing in his household, including hired hands and his sons. A list may note only that he has three tithes, but sometimes it may list the tithes by name.

For localities in which there is a continuous run of tax rolls, we can determine birth order and approximate birth years of sons as we watch them appear one at a time, immediately following the name of the man who is likely their father. We can "see" them move out on their own, perhaps buying property or renting, often about the time they married. This typical life pattern may help us make sense of otherwise unconnected records.

We may learn of a death for which there is no probate,


List of Taxable property within the County of Fayette for the Year 1840 by the Assessor

Persons Names
& Bargable to Tax

White males over 16 yrs.
Males under 16 yrs
Slaves over 16 yrs
Slaves under 16 yrs
Horses mares mules & Colts
Gold watches
Pleasure Carriages & Spring waggons
Common Silver watches
Brass Clocks
Wooden Clocks
Billiard and Stud tables

Carriages of every description
That are Taxable with Horses
Included

Total Amount of Taxes
$ ct

George	Alderson	1	2	1		1	2		$135	55	
Chandler	Arthur	1	1							13	
Alexander	Arthur	1	2							33	
Isaac	Arthur	1	2							25	
Thomas	Arthur	1	1							13	
[illegible]											

People were taxed on income-producing property and luxuries. In this tax roll they were not taxed for their tithe (poll).

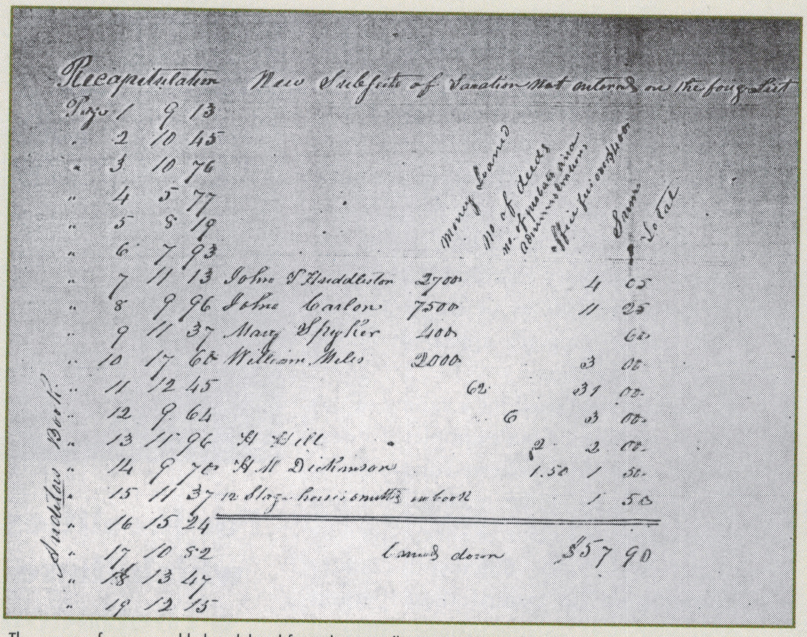
when William Wilson is no longer on the tax list, but "William Wilson est" [estate] or "Mary Wilson" appears with approximately the same property.

As family historians, we often struggle with the problem of keeping men of the same name separated. The tax collector of our ancestors' times had the same problem. Many of them added identifiers to their lists to remind themselves of which man was which. It is common to find the following identifiers used on tax records:

- **Relative age.** Designations such as "jr." or "sr." do not indicate relationship, just relative age.
- **Occupation.** Many men had an auxiliary occupation, even if they were primarily farmers.
- **Place of residence.** The name of a creek, mountain, or small settlement can help us place an ancestor in a limited locality, even if he did not own land. Often abbreviated, you will need to study the county to figure out that CC is Cripple Creek and NR is New River.
- **Name of father.** Sometimes we are lucky and the record actually says "son of John," providing proof that does not exist in vital records. However, the identification may be somewhat cryptic. In Loudoun County, Virginia, a man was listed as "son of potter" in 1783; in prior years the only potter was a Thomas, thereby providing the name of the father. The single letters J, A, and R written next to some names in Middlesex County, New Jersey, were baffling until analysis showed they were the collector's notation for "son of Jacob," "son of Aaron," and "son of Reuben."
- **Physical characteristics.** Just as we do today, tax collectors described persons by their appearance, so we may occasionally find a notation for "little," "tall," "red" (hair), or even "CE" (cross-eyed).

These identifiers, or markers, tell us many details about our ancestral family. When used with other records, they can make genealogical connections that otherwise elude us.

Our goal in family history research is to find a document that says what we want it to say: that John Jones of Green County is the same man as John Jones of White County. Or that Jane Jones who married Henry Hill in White County is the daughter of John Jones. The reality is that often we cannot find such a document. When this happens, we must build a case based on the evidence we can find. Tax records often serve as the mortar that holds those pieces of evidence together.


Recapitulation

The names of persons added or deleted from the tax rolls are sometimes found at the end of the list.

Tax records provide supporting evidence for migration. If John Jones appeared on the tax rolls of Green County from 1785 to 1795 and then completely disappeared, and John Jones appeared on the tax rolls of White County beginning in 1796, we can say that this is likely the same man, given other records that also point this way. More importantly, if John Jones remained on the Green County tax rolls until 1799, this is not a valid ancestral migration.

Whether they are helping to solve difficult problems or providing details about our ancestors, tax records can be a rich resource for family historians.

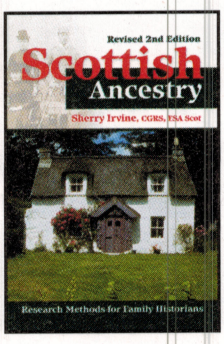
Patricia Law Hatcher, CG, FASG, is the author of Producing a Quality Family History *and* Locating Your Roots—Discover Your Ancestors Using Land Records *and is a frequent contributor to the* Ancestry Daily News.

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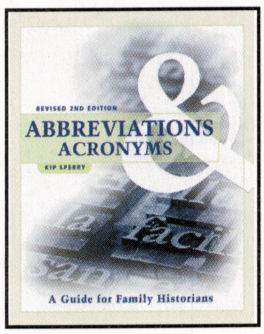
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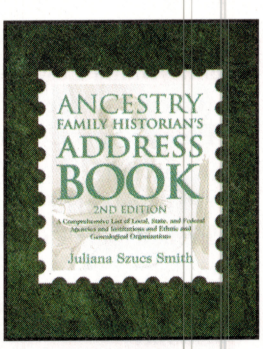
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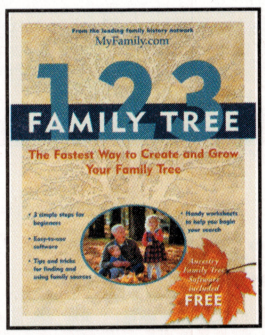
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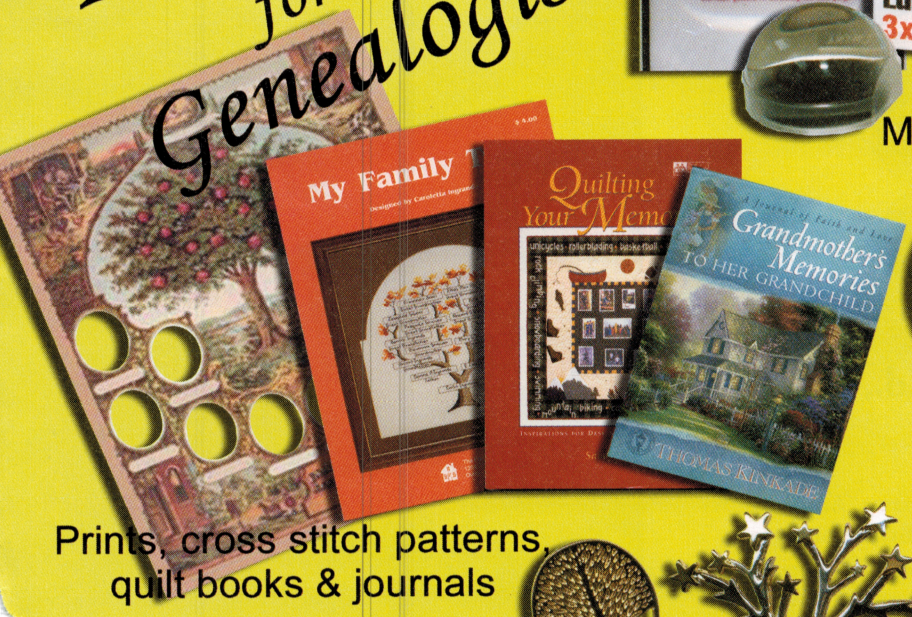
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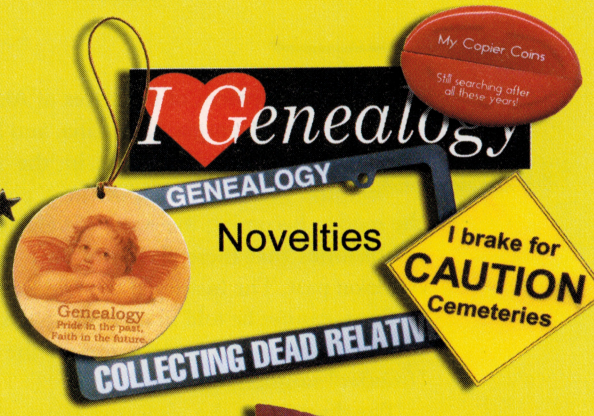
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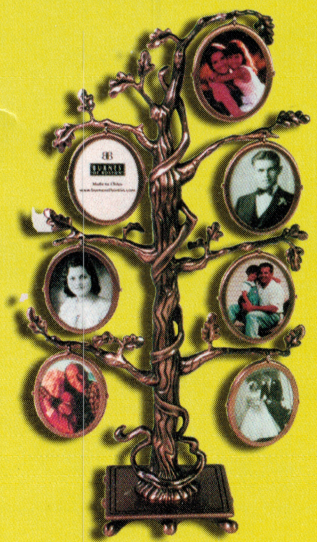
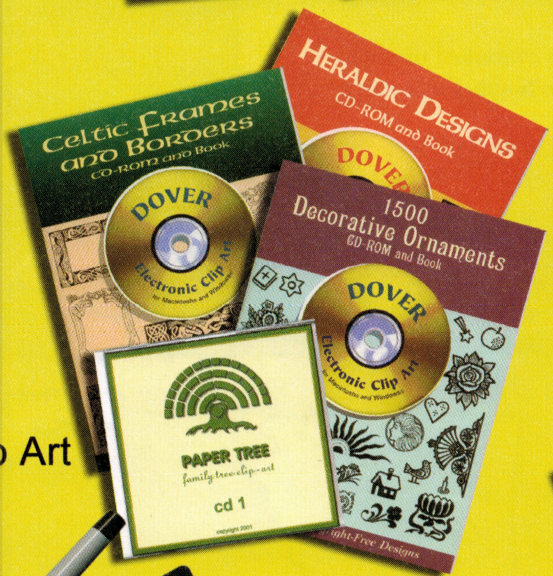


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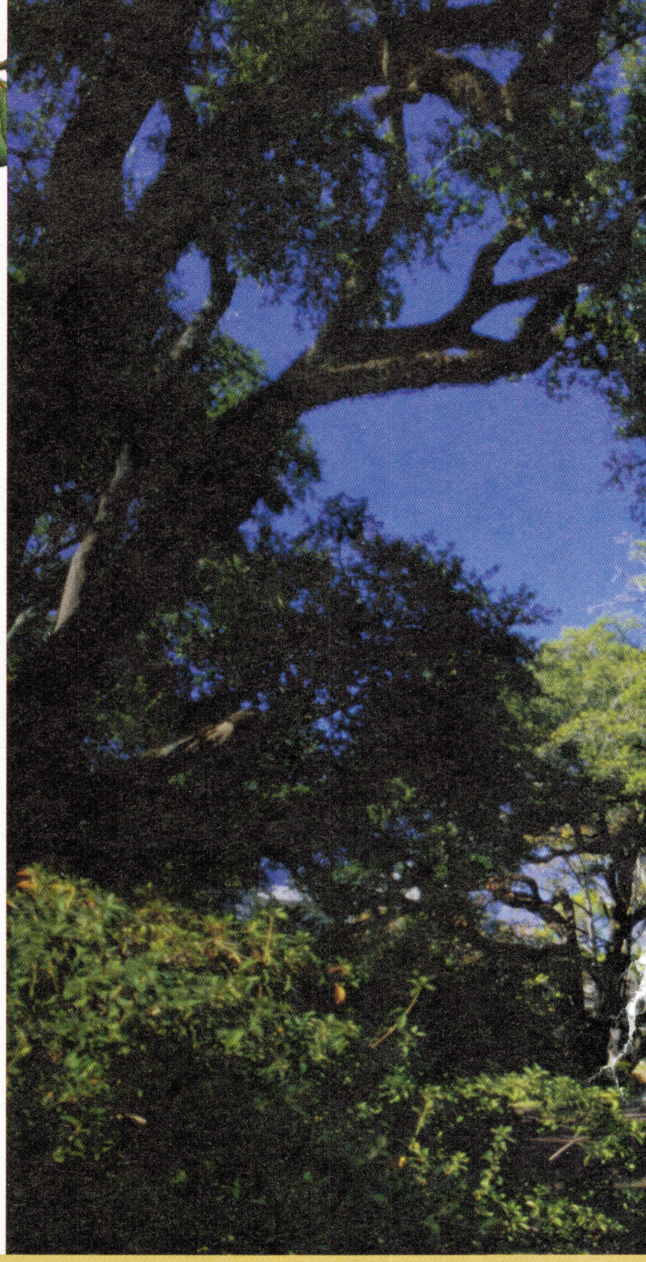
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by Robert S. Davis, M. Ed., M. A.

The settlement of the states of Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Louisiana, and Mississippi began with European outposts in the colonial wars of empire. However, each of these political entities, on the road to becoming the states of today, made such different histories that these six states only sometimes share a common past. The history of the Old South, from Virginia to Texas, cannot be told in any one state's story although it can be found in the experiences of the many migratory "frontier" southern families.

The diversity of the respective states continued through to the present, making research in the South particularly

RESEARCH IN THE









DEEP SOUTH







difficult. A researcher must learn about each state, not the entire region, through such resources as the current edition of *Ancestry's Red Book* (Ancestry, 1997). Lack of a tradition of early vital records and religious faiths that did not leave parish registers among a widespread people during a long frontier period also makes finding information on individuals in these six states difficult. Patience in southern genealogy proves not only a virtue but an important and necessary research tool.

Something like region-wide consistency begins only in 1830 with the first relatively complete and credible federal census records for all of these states. (Earlier census records for these states usually did not survive in the federal courts where they were kept.) Most of the members of the last Native American tribes in these states were removed to western Arkansas, today's Oklahoma, shortly afterwards, creating a large volume of federal and other records of the Indians, and the whites among them, that can contain extensive family information. Even removing and, in some instances, battling Indians, ultimately contributed to the thousands of genealogically valuable military bounty, pension, and other military records of southerners. These records survive today for the various early wars of the South, 1783–1855, in the National Archives and Records Administration in Washington, DC.



Patience in southern genealogy proves not only a virtue but an important and necessary research tool.

All of the states examined here, except for Georgia, were federal territories and states. Personal information appears on the settlers of those states in such well-known works as *The American State Papers* and *The Territorial Papers of the United States*. Colonial and early federal records have also been published for individual states. Bureau of Land Management indexes for the land grants of these federal land states have been made widely available but are incomplete for pre-1820 credit grants and for the homestead applications that were never completed. An alternative index in the National Archives should be consulted by mail for complete references through 1908 for Alabama, Florida, and Louisiana. The National Archives also has genealogically valuable military bounty land applications (to 1855), even those made by Georgia soldiers and their heirs, and homestead applications (1862–1927) for federal lands. The Eastern Division of the Bureau of Land Management also has additional information on individual federal land grants. For information on access, contact the BLM through its website at <www.glorecords.blm.gov>.

The American Civil War/Reconstruction Era created especially valuable records for these southern states. Confederacy-wide indexes to service records, such as on Ancestry.com, led to National Archives service and related records on microfilm that can contain personal information. Each of these state governments gave pensions to elderly and impoverished resident Confederate veterans and widows, as well as to veterans and widows of veterans who lived in states that did not give Confederate service pensions. These files and related records vary widely from state to state but, for states like Alabama and Arkansas, the personal data can be extensive. Most of the material from the Reconstruction still lacks useful indexes and publication, but extensive personal data on thousands of former slaves and other persons found in what survives of the registers of the Freedman's Bank has been abstracted on CD-ROM by the Genealogical Society of Utah.

Genealogical periodicals in the Deep South in general, however, concentrate on abstracting records, not compiled family histories. Too often these journals have incomplete indexes, when indexed at all.

Regionally, these states have two great libraries for family history research, The Southern History and Literature Department, Birmingham Public Library, 2100 Park Place, Birmingham, AL 35202, (online at <www.bplonline.org>) and the Washington Memorial Library, 1180 Washington Avenue, Macon, GA 31201, (online at <www.co.bibb.ga.us/library/G&H.htm>). The Family & Regional History Program, James C. Bailey College (formerly Wallace State), PO Box 2000, 801 N. Main Street, Hanceville, Alabama 35077-2000 has extensive Revolutionary War, southern, Civil War, and Native American microfilms, with related books, not found elsewhere in a single resource center.

Many of the most important finds by southern genealogists turn up in private rather than public records, such as the family papers, genealogical research collections, busi-

ness records, etc., in the region's thousands of manuscripts and special collections departments. The greatest single repository for such material, for the genealogist and historian of the South, is the Southern Historical Collection, CB# 3926, Wilson Library, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, Chapel Hill, NC 27514-8890, (online at <www.lib.unc.edu/mss/shcgl.html>). The nearby Rare Book, Manuscript, and Special Collections Library, Perkins Library, Duke University, Durham, NC 27708-0185, (online at <http://scriptorium.lib.duke.edu>), would come in second place.

Most southern researchers find using local public records on microfilm at individual state archives more efficient, at least initially, than searching in individual courthouses, although many county records have not yet been microfilmed. The six states discussed here have the oldest state archives in the United States (Alabama, Mississippi, and Georgia, all of which are getting new buildings in 2003) and the newest (Louisiana and Florida) in the United States. Local federal records, including for the district and circuit courts for Alabama, Florida, Georgia, and Mississippi, should be sought in the National Archives Southeast Region (soon to move to a new facility next door to the new Georgia state archives building in Morrow, Georgia). Consult its website at <www.archives.gov/facilities/ga/atlanta.html> for details. The National Archives Southwest Region, 501 West Felix Street, Building 1, PO Box 6216, Fort Worth, Texas 76115-0216, (online at <www.archives.gov/facilities/tx/fort_worth.html>) has the federal records for Arkansas and Louisiana, as well as the federal documents for southern Indians whose ancestors were removed to today's Oklahoma in the 1830s.

ALABAMA

The earliest permanent settlement in today's Alabama began at Mobile in 1702 as a French colony (1702–1763). Great Britain (1763–1780) and Spain (1780–1813) also controlled Mobile before the United States added it to the Mississippi Territory in 1813. The many local archives of Mobile, and in nearby Florida, contain extensive resources for research into the city's families. The best place to begin a search of a local genealogy, however, would be in Local History and Genealogy, Mobile Public Library, 704 Government Street, Mobile, AL 36602-1403, (online at <www.mplonline.org/lhg.htm>).

Twice Alabama went through especially great population growth. With the creation of the Alabama Territory in 1817, and statehood in 1819, families from Georgia, South Carolina, and Tennessee moved into Alabama in hopes of buying federal lands at low rates. The United States government did not meet their expectations then, but starting after 1862, it did offer lands to adults who did not aid the Confederacy for minor fees, under the Homestead Act. Families from throughout the United States responded by moving to Alabama.

As part of the Mississippi Territory (1798–1817), today's Alabama started with civil registrations of marriage licenses and bonds. (Bonds were largely dropped in 1888). Probate, marriage, and property conveyance records are kept in the individual county probate courts (called the orphans court before 1850). Criminal and civil court cases, including divorce files, are kept in the office of the individual county clerks of court. Divorces also required approval by the state legislature until 1864.

Alabama began requiring registrations of births and deaths in 1881. When these records survive through 1908, they are found in the individual county probate courts. Statewide registrations began in 1908. Public indexes to death certificates (1908–1959), state birth records (1917–1919), divorce decrees (1818–1829, 1818–1864, 1908–1927), and marriage licenses (1936–1959) are widely available. These indexes are also available on loan through LDS Family History Centers, as are the death certificates (1908–1972), marriages reports (1936–1992), and divorces (1938–1992).

Especially useful books for Alabama research include Robert S. Davis, *Tracing Your Alabama Past* (Jackson:

ALABAMA



Alabama Department of Archives & History
624 Washington Avenue
Montgomery, AL 36130-0100
www.archives.state.al.us/index.html
The ADAH's extensive holdings include the largest collection of Alabama newspaper microfilms.

Alabama Center for Health Statistics
Alabama Vital Records
PO Box 5625
Montgomery, AL 36103-5625
http://ph.state.al.us/chs/VitalRecords/Death/Death.html

Map Sales
Alabama Department of Transportation
1409 Coliseum Blvd., Room R-109
PO Box 303050
Montgomery, AL 36130-3050
www.dot.state.al.us/Bureau/Equipment/maps.htm

ARKANSAS



Arkansas History Commission
One Capitol Mall
Little Rock, AR 72201
www.ark-ives.com/
The AHC is the archives for the state of Arkansas.

Arkansas Department of Health
Division of Vital Records, Slot 44
4815 W. Markham Street
Little Rock, AR 72205-3867
www.healthyarkansas.com/certificates/certificates.html

Research Services Department
Special Collections
University of Arkansas Libraries
365 N. Ozark Ave.
Fayetteville, AR 72701-4002
http://libinfo.uark.edu/specialcollections/about/overview.asp
The largest archives for Arksansas newspapers and private manuscript collections.

Arkansas State Highway and Transportation Department
Map Sales–Room 205
10324 Interstate 30, 72209
P.O. Box 2261
Little Rock, AR 72203-2261
www.ahtd.state.ar.us/maps.htm

FLORIDA



Florida State Archives
500 South Bronough Street
Tallahassee, FL 32399-0250
http://dlis.dos.state.fl.us/barm/fsa.html

P. K. Yonge Library of Florida History
University of Florida George A. Smathers Libraries
Special Collections
P.O. Box 117007
Gainesville, FL 32611-7001
http://web.uflib.ufl.edu/spec/pkyonge
This library also serves as the archives for Florida newspapers.

Florida Department of Health
Vital Records
Mailing Address:
P.O. Box 210
Jacksonville, FL 32231-0042
Physical Location:
1217 Pearl Street
Jacksonville, FL 32202
www9.myflorida.com/planning_eval/vital_statistics/index.html

Florida Department of Transportation
Maps & Publications Sales
Mail Station 12
605 Suwannee Street
Tallahassee, FL 32399-0450
www11.myflorida.com/mapsandpublications/manuals/index.htm

University Press of Mississippi, 2003); Marcia K. Smith, *Alabama County Data and Resources* (Titus, Ala.: The Author, 1999); Marilyn Barefield Davis, *Researching in Alabama* (Birmingham: Birmingham Public Library, 1998); W. Craig Remington and Thomas J. Kallsen, *Historical Atlas of Alabama* (2 vols., Tuscaloosa: Department of Geography, University of Alabama Press, 1997–2000); and Peggy Tuck Sinko, *Alabama: Atlas of Historical County Boundaries* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1996).

ARKANSAS

The French established the first permanent settlement in what became Arkansas in 1686. The British took over administration of the area as part of Louisiana in 1762 but, in the negotiations that followed, Spain took over the region in 1766 and operated its government until Napoleon sold what became Arkansas, as part of the Louisiana Purchase, to the United States in 1803. It became the Missouri Territory in 1812, the Arkansas Territory in 1819, and the state of Arkansas in 1836.

During each of these periods, waves of settlers arrived from the east, such as the veterans and their families of the War of 1812, who came to claim two million acres of land set aside for them between the Arkansas and St. Francis rivers.

Each county clerk keeps his or her respective county records, including the bound and loose estate records. Civil marriages start as early as 1821 and probate records begin in

1819. Statewide registration of births and deaths begin in 1914 although many counties did not comply for years afterwards. The indexes to Arkansas death records have been published for 1914–1940. Marriages were recorded statewide beginning in 1917 and divorces in 1923.

FLORIDA

St. Augustine, founded as a Spanish outpost, is the oldest continuous settlement north of Mexico. Florida was ruled by Spain (1565–1763, 1784–1821) and Great Britain (1763–1783). It became a separate territory in 1821 and a state in 1845. Although many nations tried to settle the vast peninsula, significant settlement of the state began after the American Civil War with the arrival of railroads.

Records of Floridians are relatively centralized. Colonial resources are best sought in the historical archives of the cities that grew up from these settlements, such as the St. Augustine Historical Society, 271 Charlotte Street, St. Augustine, FL 32084. The Florida Department of Archives and History has land grant records; microfilm of many county records; miscellaneous tax records; files of the Florida Pioneers Papers; state censuses for 1845, 1885, 1935, and 1945 that supplement the federal censuses that begin with 1830; and much more. Few states have so many lists of its general population that have survived, from colonial times to almost the present, and so many to have been published, such as the Civil War service records. The Florida Tombstone Transcription Project at <www.rootsweb.com/~cemetery/florida/florida.htm> endeavors to preserve the information found on all of the state's grave markers.



Contrary to widely published myth, the colony of Georgia never received the poor, debtors, or criminals from Great Britain.

Local government records are held by the individual county clerks. Civil registrations of marriages and probate records survive from as early as 1821. Deaths were being registered as early as 1877 but were not required until 1899 and were not general until some years later.

Each region of Florida is served, respectively, by a local university private manuscripts and special collections department, such as the Special Collections and West Florida Archives, John C. Pace Library, University of West Florida, 11000 University Parkway, Pensacola, FL 32514-5750, (see <www.lib.uwf.edu/SpecialCollections/index.shtml>) covering the Florida "panhandle" to New Orleans, Louisiana. For the whole state, the P. K. Yonge Library University of Florida in Gainesville has extensive manuscript and photograph collections. The University of Florida Libraries also has one of the world's great map collections.

Some Florida research publications that merit special mention include Diane C. Roble, *Searching in Florida: A Reference Guide to Public and Private Records* (Costa Mesa, Calif.: ISC Publications, 1982); Paul S. George, *A Guide to the History of Florida* (Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1989); and James A. and Lana D. Servies, *A Bibliography of Florida* (4 vols. to date, Pensacola: King & Queen Books, 2003).

GEORGIA

Georgia began in 1733 as the thirteenth colony founded by the British on the American mainland. Contrary to widely published myth, the colony never received the poor, debtors, or criminals from Great Britain; although a nonprofit trust did initiate the colony to offer worthy middle class families a chance at new homes in America. Until 1777, local government in the province consisted of only the court in Savannah. Almost all of the public records to that year have survived, with at least published indexes, and can be found today in the Georgia Department of Archives and History.

Although many Georgians supported the king or otherwise wanted no part of any war of independence, Georgia joined the other twelve colonies that declared independence on 4 July 1776. The great period of Georgia's growth occurred from 1783 to 1794, when soldiers hired from the Carolinas and Virginia to serve in the state during that war returned to permanently settle in the state, bringing with them thousands of their kinsmen and neighbors. Although on paper Georgia extended to the Pacific Ocean, the state never exercised any authority outside of the state's present boundaries. However, the passports issued by its governors to families passing through the Creek lands, 1785–1820, are one of the great sources for documentation of families moving west to Alabama, Arkansas, Louisiana, and Mississippi. These records are abstracted in Dorothy Potter, *Passports of*

GEORGIA



Georgia Department of Archives and History
soon to move to 5800 Jonesboro Road
Morrow, GA 30260
www.sos.state.ga.us/archives/

Georgia Vital Records
2600 Skyland Drive NE
Atlanta, GA 30319-3640
www.health.state.ga.us/programs/vitalrecords/index.shtml

Georgia Newspaper Project
University of Georgia Libraries
Athens, GA 30602-1641
www.libs.uga.edu/gnp
The University of Georgia Libraries is also home to the Hargrett Rare Books and Manuscripts Library, the largest of Georgia's more than 100 private manuscripts archives.

Georgia Department of Transportation
Office of Communications
Map Sales Unit
No. 2 Capitol Square
Atlanta, GA 30334
www.dot.state.ga.us/dot/communications/mapsales/index.shtml

LOUISIANA



Louisiana State Archives
3851 Essen Lane
Baton Rouge, LA 70809-2137
http://www.sec.state.la.us/archives/archives/archives-index.htm

Louisiana Vital Records Registry
PO Box 60630
New Orleans, LA 70160
http://oph.dhh.state.la.us/recordsstatistics/vitalrecords

LaParish.com
Louisiana State & Parish Guide
http://www.louisiana-parish.com/

Louisiana Newspaper Project
Special Collections
Louisiana State University Libraries
Baton Rouge, LA 70803
http://www.lib.lsu.edu/special/lnp.html

Southeastern Pioneers, 1770–1823 (Baltimore: Genealogical Publishing Company, 1982).

Georgia has 159 counties, almost all of which have public libraries, each with a local heritage rooms. The state's county boundary changes have caused endless confusion but so has the fact that more than thirty of these counties have the same or nearly the same names as Georgia cities not found in those respective counties. For example, the city of Macon, Georgia, is in Bibb County and not in Macon County, Georgia, which is some 100 miles distant.

Contrary to popular myth, the state lost relatively few local records, or even private property, to Sherman's march or during the Civil War, although the Ku Klux Klan did burn several courthouses and their contents in the years that followed. Estate records and marriages are kept in the individual county probate court (known as the Ordinary to 1789, as the Inferior Court for Ordinary Purposes to 1868, and the Ordinary Court to 1974). Registration of marriage licenses began in 1804 although many times individual records were not brought back to the respective courthouse for recording. Property conveyance records and court records, including divorces, are kept in the individual county superior courts. Georgia began allowing divorces in 1797 but until 1838 the legislature had to approve individual divorces granted by the superior courts.

Georgia briefly attempted statewide registration of births, deaths, and marriages in 1875. What few records were created by this effort can now be found at the Georgia Department of Archives and History. A few cities kept voluntary vital records. In 1915, the state required counties to keep birth and death records but this law was completely ignored until 1919 and largely ignored until the late 1920s. An index to the Georgia death certificates (1919 to present) is widely available, as are the indexes to marriages and divorces (1964 to present).

The Georgia Department of Archives and History has what survives of the state's land grant records from 1733 to the present. The eastern fifth of Georgia was granted by headrights to heads of household and as bounties to the state's Revolutionary War veterans. Individuals received

grants to the rest of the state through a series of land grant lotteries in 1805, 1807, 1820, 1821, 1827, and 1832. Lists of the grants and other records have been published that serve as substitutes for and supplements to the federal censuses. (The earliest Georgia federal census to survive is most of the 1820 census but, even for the county returns that survive, there were many omissions.)

Georgia's newspaper resources deserve special mention. No state has such extensive typescripts, books, and websites that index, abstract, or electronically scan newspapers. This access includes newspapers from 1763 to the early 1900s.

Some Georgia books for research that should be especially noted include Ted. O. Brooke and Robert S. Davis, *Georgia Research* (Atlanta: Georgia Genealogical Society, 2002); Robert Holcomb Warnock, *Georgia Sources for Family History* (Atlanta: Georgia Genealogical Society, 1995); and James E. Dorsey, *Georgia Genealogy and Local History: A Bibliography* (Spartanburg, S.C.: Reprint Company, 1983).

LOUISIANA

France established the colony of Louisiana in 1699. Originally, the province stretched from the Gulf of Mexico to Canada. In 1763, France gave to Spain control over all territory on the west side of the Mississippi River, lands that Spain administered until Napoleon sold the Louisiana Purchase to the United States in 1803. Not only have the colonial records of Louisiana largely survived but much of this material has been indexed and published as well. What became today's Louisiana was a territory until statehood in 1812.

Louisiana has parishes instead of counties. Estate records prior to 1845 were held by each probate court. Today each county's clerk of court maintains the parish records and can have marriages and probates to the early 1700s. Church records and voluntary registrations of births and deaths can go back to the 1700s but Louisiana did not require statewide registration of vital records until 1914. Unlike the other states discussed in this article, Louisiana has at least some federal census records dating to 1810.

Louisiana is famed for its exceptionally large number of historical and genealogical societies, as well as local archives. New Orleans, always one of the largest cities of the Old South, has many such organizations and institutions, including for specific ethnic groups.

MISSISSIPPI

In 1699, the French established Biloxi as the first permanent settlement in what has become today's Mississippi. France continued to control the area until the end of the French and Indian War in 1763 when it passed to Great Britain. In 1779, during the American Revolution, Spain took control of Biloxi and held that area until 1798, when the United States created the Mississippi territory from most of what is today's Alabama and Mississippi. Coastal Mississippi became part of the Mississippi Territory in 1812. Mississippi received statehood in 1817, the same year Alabama was created from the Mississippi Territory. Some counties were split in the process.

The assembly of the Mississippi Territory in 1799 laid out the basis for local government in today's Alabama and Mississippi. Originally estates were handled by each county's orphans court but in Mississippi today they are found in a county's probate and chancery courts. Registration of births and deaths began for Mississippi in 1912. An index to death certificates, 1912–1942, and to the state's marriage records, 1802–1926, are widely available. The earliest federal census records for this state begin in 1820.

Of special value as a Mississippi bibliography and as a guide to the extensive holdings of the Mississippi Department of Archives and History is Anne S. Lipscomb and Kathleen S. Hutchison, *Tracing Your Mississippi Ancestors* (Jackson: University Press of Mississippi, 1994).

Robert S. Davis, M. Ed., M.A. directs the library and classes of the Family & Regional History Program at James C. Bailey College in Hanceville, Alabama. He has published hundreds of articles and several books on records and research.

MISSISSIPPI



Mississippi Department of Archives and History
P. O. Box 571
Jackson, MS 39205-0571
www.mdah.state.ms.us
The MDAH is also the archives for Mississippi's newspapers.

Mississippi State Department of Health
Vital Records Office
571 Stadium Street
P.O. Box 1700
Jackson, MS 39215
www.msdh.state.ms.us/phs/index.htm

Mississippi Department of Transportation, Map Sales Office
Post Office Box 1850
(MDOT Administration Building at 401 North West Street, Room 1067)
Jackson, MS 39215-1850
www.gomdot.com/business/maps/map_online.htm

Elements of a Research Log



by Terry and Jim Willard

It often seems like we get lost in the thickest part of the research "forest." But one tool, a good research log, can help to guide us through the dense trees. This useful, yet often underutilized, tool provides a way to keep track of where we have been and, more importantly, to document what we have found. Once we have successfully used the research log to guide us through the forest, it will also provide a "trail" to help others return to that same source of information.

Unfortunately, when we began our own research, we did not keep a good research log. We are now in the process of reviewing our data, and we often find that we have no clue where we found the information originally. Without documentation, the information is suspect at best and totally worthless to anyone else.

In this article, we want to focus on the most important elements of a good research log and how this information relates to your project.

The first element is the most obvious. Quite simply, researchers should keep a research log. This log should be the first piece of paper out of the briefcase or bag when they are setting up at the library, and it should remain at the top of the pile for the duration of the research session.

Many family historians have found that a research log can be very helpful in planning research trips. As you preview the online category for the library or repository you will be visiting, your research log can help you prevent duplicating previous efforts. You can also use your log to outline your "game plan." As you find items in the library's catalog, use the forms to keep track of sources you want to search. Then, when you are on location, you will have your "map" handy, complete with call and microfilm numbers. As you go down the list in your log, just enter the date and results of your search.

By the way, don't forget to keep a research log for your online research at home as well. When you're surfing around from site to site, it's easy to get carried away and neglect to keep a research log. But chances are that when you go to the computer later, you'll end up visiting the same places—again and again. This can be good strategy, since many websites are always adding new information. But if you don't take the time to keep track of what sites you've researched, what you have researched those sites for, and what those sites contain, you can waste a lot of time and effort that could be spent on more profitable searches.

While you could write down your online searches on paper, you may find it easier to keep a separate online research log. Keep your document open while doing searches and simply copy and paste the URL into the new document, along with the date and your findings (or lack of findings). The next time you want to start surfing the Web in search of any new ancestors, open your document and compare the sites you've already visited, adding the new URLs to those from your previous searches. The website may provide a reference for the information posted; if so, write down the information carefully, so you can verify it against the original at your earliest convenience.

Second, it's helpful to keep a separate log for each individual or family being researched, as well as each location or time period, if the information is more general. Researchers should make a bibliographic notation in the research log of all the materials examined while doing research. (Note: Your family history will require only the sources used to prove your data, but the research log should include every source you consult so you won't waste time with resources that have already proven unhelpful.)

This notation should include the date of the research, where the research took place (e.g., the name of the library), and all the identifying information on the source. As a rule of thumb, the following sequence of information should be followed: 1)

Without organizational techniques, it is easy to feel hopelessly lost in the forest of records and research.

author(s), 2) title, 3) volume number, 4) editor(s), 5) edition, 6) volume number if in a series, 7) place of publication, 8) publishing company, 9) date published, and 10) call number or other information detailing the location of the particular source.

When sources other than books are consulted, such as a transcript of an interview, a letter, a primary source document, or a website, you will need to provide as much of this identifying information as possible (e.g., name of source, date, and location).

A good genealogy software program is the best way to keep track of your sources. These programs allow you to enter the bibliographic information just once in something usually referred to as a source library.

In our research log, we use our own private shorthand for different types of sources, especially frequently used ones, and you may want to do the same. However, it's also necessary to keep a record of all the information about a source that you'll need to cite it properly when you share the information with others.

Copying the title and copyright pages is often the most convenient way to do this. You'll find guidance and examples on proper citation forms in *The BCG Genealogical Standards Manual* (Ancestry, 2000) by the Board for Certification of Genealogists, and in Elizabeth Shown Mills' *Evidence: Citation and Analysis for the Family Historian* (GPC, 1997).

Remember that the content in a research log is for personal use only. Proper citation should be provided elsewhere in your records and should reflect the guidelines used by careful family historians. Notes, whether embedded in the text, at the foot of the page, or the end of an article, require enough information that others can readily find and check the source for themselves. Bibliographies contain generally the same information, but in a slightly different style, as discussed in the above-mentioned references.

Primary Sources

Birth Certificate

Birth Certificate for James Howard Willard, 1 October 1947, Certificate #14870, filed at time of birth with the Office of the City Clerk, Lewiston, Androscoggin, Maine. Certified copy in the possession of James H. and Theresa A. Willard.

Marriage License

Marriage License (No. 7). Charles M. Willard to Mary Russ, issued 14 August 1833, by the Town Clerk in Wilton, Franklin, Maine. Certified copy in the possession of James H. and Theresa A. Willard.

Death Certificate

Death Certificate for George Hamel, 22 August 1935, Certificate # 15349, on file at the Office of the City Clerk, Lewiston, Androscoggin, Maine. Certified copy in the possession of James H. and Theresa A. Willard.

Family Bible

Family Bible (No. 1) of Mary Russ Willard, in the possession of Ella Morse Willard, Portland, Cumberland,

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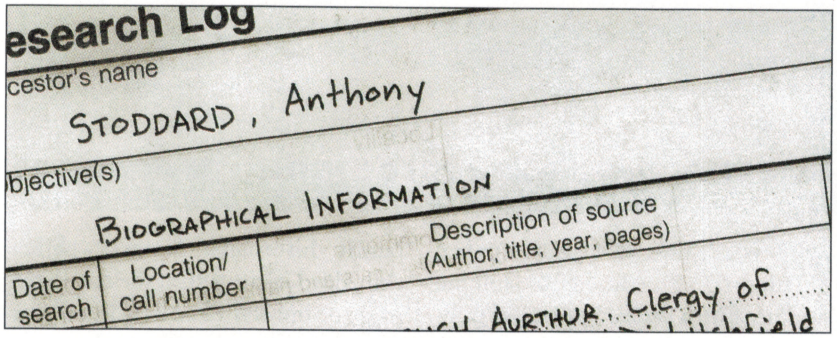
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Maine (no publication information available), hand copied by James H. Willard on July 23, 1979.

Census Data

U.S. Census of 1930, Lewiston, Androscoggin, Maine, ed. 20, sheet no. 13A, roll T626_827, family 289, household of Joseph Cloutier.



Secondary Sources

Published Family History

Descendants of Henry-2 Willard of Still River, Massachusetts (The Willard Family Association of America, Inc., 1989), Library of Congress Catalog Card Number: 89-50888), in the possession of James H. and Theresa A. Willard.

Genealogical Dictionary

Tanguay, Cyprien, *Genealogical Dictionary of Canadian Families*, 7 volumes (Montreal, 1877). Reprint in the possession of James H. and Theresa A. Willard.

Personal Letter

Proper, D. R. (Letter #3), Letter to Mr. & Mrs. James H. Willard, 18 August 1977. The original handwritten letter is in the possession of James H. and Theresa A. Willard.

Newspaper Obituary

Obituary (#17) for Shirley Howard Willard, Auburn, Maine, *The Lewiston Daily Sun/Journal*, 16 February 1994, p. 2, col. 4. Photocopy in the possession of James H. and Theresa A. Willard.

Personal Interview

Personal Interview (#1) with Gertrude Samson by James H. and Theresa A. Willard, 8 July 1978, at a family reunion in Portland, Maine. Notes taken by Theresa A. Willard.

These examples represent some of the more common sources of genealogical data. There are numerous others that you will consult as well. The important point is to record as much identifying information as possible on the source being consulted.

Genealogy is a hobby of managing information—lots of information! Without effective organizational techniques, it is easy to feel hopelessly lost in the forest of records and research. Accurate documentation is the genealogist's path through the forest. And by documenting your data, even if you don't want to find your way out of the research forest yet, at least someone else can follow your trail.

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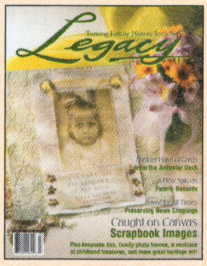
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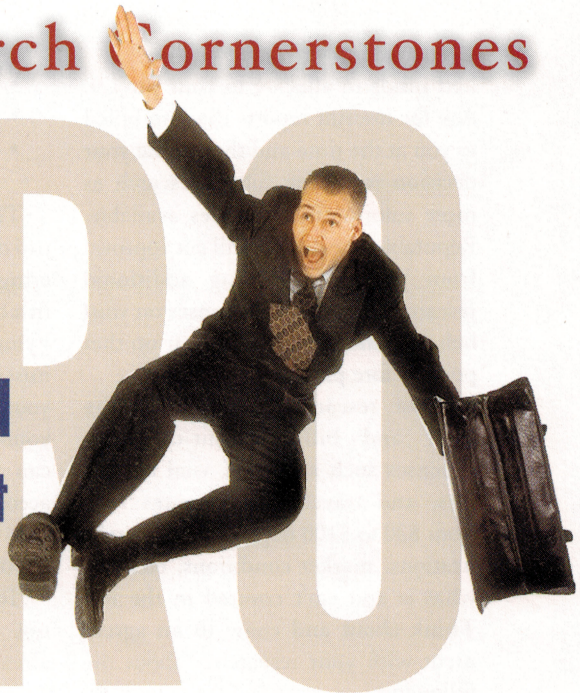
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Hiring a Professional Genealogist



by Roseann Reinemuth Hogan, Ph.D.

So you've mined the Internet until the wee hours in the morning? You've climbed up and down the ladders at the county courthouse pulling down heavy, dusty volumes? You've spent summer vacations trekking through abandoned cemeteries full of weeds and snakes? You've riffled through all the family photographs and asked many questions of family members and you're still not satisfied with your research findings?

It is rare not to need help at some point in your family history research. Hiring a professional may be the solution. Knowing when to do so, how to prepare, what to provide the researcher, and what you can reasonably expect are key to making the venture a productive one. Following are a few tips to consider when hiring a professional researcher.

When Is It Time to Hire a Professional?

There are a number of circumstances that warrant hiring a professional. The most common is simply not being able to access records at a distant repository. Some researchers use professionals if they have a particularly complex problem they don't have the time or expertise to solve. Other more experienced researchers may wish to have another person review their work and suggest research strategies. Finally, researchers may need help discovering living relatives, as in the case of adoptions and birth parent searches. However you arrive at your decision, it is important that you contact the right person at the right stage of your research and that you provide the information necessary to secure further family information.

What Can a Professional Do for Me?

Professional genealogists offer a variety of services. The most common are researching a family's ancestry, tracing the family to an immigrant ancestor or country of origin, creating a lineage, and preparing papers for various society memberships. Some genealogists specialize in a particular geographic area, ethnic group, or time period. An experienced genealogist will be familiar with developing research strategies and evaluating records. Professionals can also help identify descendants if you are interested in writing a complete family history and want to include all family members of a particular ancestor. Family historians are often hired by legal firms or financial institutions to establish legal heirs to an estate. Professional genealogists may work independently or for a library or archive, a research company, or a legal firm or financial institution.

Whom Should I Hire?

While there have been efforts to require certification or licensure of genealogists, especially as it relates to privacy issues and access to modern records, there is currently no uniform law regarding licensing. As a result, professional researchers may acquire their credentials from one of several organizations. In addition to these credentialing agencies, you should consider other criteria as you make your hiring decision. Most genealogists are self-taught, and many competent professionals do not seek credentials. Years of education, research experience, interests, and satisfactory service to clients may be just as important as credentials.

Consult a listing for researchers in the area you are interested in and contact several of them (see page 53). Find out about their experience, their professional affiliations, and their ease of access to records. If you have a special project in mind, ask about their experience in those specialty areas. When working with a research firm, ask for the credentials of the person who will actually be doing your work.

What About Fees?

Most professional researchers will ask for an initial retainer. Find out what their practice is regarding continuing research beyond the retainer. Be specific about how much research you authorize at the outset. It is unwise to allow a project unlimited research time unless you have unlim-

ited funds to allocate to your project. Ask for interim reports that are billed to you at the time and then make your decision regarding future research as more information becomes available. Reputable researchers will get approval from you before doing additional research or incurring expenses on your behalf. Make sure you're clear on that point before proceeding.

Most researchers charge by the hour and bill for out-of-pocket expenses such as copies, vital records fees, and travel. Hourly rates vary from $20 to $100 depending on qualifications, market conditions, etc. Ask what is and isn't covered in the fee. Think about and come to an agreement with your researcher about the following:

- Research parameters
- Payment terms
- Continuing research
- Publication rights to the research
- Content of reports
- Goals and priorities for research

There are things you can do to control or limit your costs, including gathering as much information as you can in a clear format. Be very clear in specifying the goal of the project and commission only one report at a time. Do your own work in the interim. Ask your researcher for advice on what you can do to partner with him or her in accomplishing the research.

What Should I Provide?

To ensure that the researcher does not duplicate the work you have already done, be sure to include as much of a summary report as possible along with a family group sheet, a lineage chart, and your research log. The log should list references searched along with what you found and did not find in the records. Providing copies of key source documents is always helpful. A documented chronology of the family and critical events is a valuable tool to identify gaps in research and where information simply doesn't jive. Simply preparing the document may help you organize your thoughts and see where there are gaps in research.

Make sure you can provide evidence to support the facts you tell your researcher. Is this something that was told to you? Do you have definitive proof or is it a conclusion based on a number of pieces of information? Often the value in hiring a professional is having a fresh eye to question the results, see a missing clue, or find something that doesn't quite fit.

What Can I Expect?

One of my favorite opening lines from potential clients goes something like this:

"I've relentlessly researched this family for the past thirty years and have had no luck finding my great-great-grandfather to date. Will you please go to the archives tomorrow and find him for me?"

While every professional genealogist would love to rise to the challenge, they are not miracle workers. It is important to keep your research focused on a particular set of questions, to know what you want, and to communicate your priorities to your researcher. No researcher can guarantee that he or she can find your relative or can know how many hours it will take. If your researcher makes such promises, find another one. Each family history is unique and no reputable researcher guarantees results. You are paying for the researcher's time and expertise, not results.

The key to working effectively with a professional researcher is to clearly define the goals of the project, to

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- Full name and address;
- Exact date of birth, age, and race;
- Citizenship status, and, if alien, citizen of what country;
- Employer's name and address (and, nearly always, person's occupation);
- Eye and hair color, height, build, any disabilities (and often whether bald);
- Signature (or mark) of applicant, and date of registration;

Many of the cards also include:

- Exact place of birth (including town in old country, if immigrant!)
- Number and type of dependents – father / mother / minor brothers or sisters / wife / children;
- Marital status;
- Description of any previous military service, U.S. or foreign!
- Any grounds claimed for exemption – religious, occupational, sole support, etc.;
- Nearest relative's name and address!
- Father's exact place of birth (including town in old country, if immigrant!)

Search fees: $15 (if his residence was rural or small town under 30,000 pop.); $30 (if larger town/city and you can provide his street address); $35 (if larger town/city and you cannot provide street address);

Please provide full name, residence in 1917-18 (State, county, and, if applicable, town or city), plus, if known: date of birth, occupation, marital status, and wife's name. Include fee (for each person you are seeking) plus long self-addressed, stamped envelope.

You will receive a photocopy of the actual registration card, front and back, if found, including all information shown, as well as cost estimate to provide all cards of that surname in that local district!

Paul Douglas Schweikle

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establish priorities, and to communicate what is known and not known, and most importantly, which records have been researched.

A good research plan typically begins with an overview of the research. The researcher will need to become familiar with your family, its names, and the research that has been done thus far, so the first few hours of a project can be taken up in just studying your documents. It is typically not worth anyone's time to commission less than a day of research, unless you have a very time-limited project or simply need a record look-up.

Once complete, you can expect a documented and clearly written report summarizing what records were searched and what was found in each source, including sources where nothing was found. Recommendations for future research along with some analysis of the findings help solidify the thoughts of both you and the researcher to determine the next step. Reports should include research notes and identification of all sources searched with negative as well as positive results. Documentation of findings, such as copies of original documents and secondary materials, may also be included.

Don't be afraid to ask questions and get clarification of any points you don't understand or that seem inconsistent.

What Happens Next?

Be open to what your genealogist tells you. Try not to let your preconceptions about what the family was, where they were, etc., limit your thinking. A tragic example from my own experience was when a young woman asked me to locate her father shortly after the death of her mother. She had been told that her father abandoned the family when she was only two years old. After several months of painstaking research, I found a man whom I believed was her father. But he wasn't living in the state that she thought he would be and he used a slightly different spelling of his surname. My client chose not to contact the man. Three years later, she e-mailed me with the sad news. She finally decided to call the number I had provided. It was indeed her father, but he had died the year before. His widow cried at hearing her voice and told her that her father had been searching for her his whole life. The two reunited and shared what they could.

Be open. Don't let what you think you know, what you think the spelling of a name is, close your mind to the possibilities. Once you hire a researcher, you've acquired a partner that could lead you to a grand journey of discovery.

Roseann Reinemuth Hogan, Ph.D., has been researching her family history since 1978. Her special interests include oral histories and social history.

Associations for Professional Genealogists

APG Directory of Professional Genealogists
The Association of Professional Genealogists
P.O. Box 40393
Denver, CO 80204-0393
<www.apgen.org>

Accredited Genealogists
International Commission for the Accreditation of Professional Genealogists (IcapGen)
P.O. Box 1144
Salt Lake City, UT 84111-1144
<www.infouga.org>

Certified Genealogists
Board for Certification of Genealogists
P.O. Box 14291
Washington, D.C. 20044
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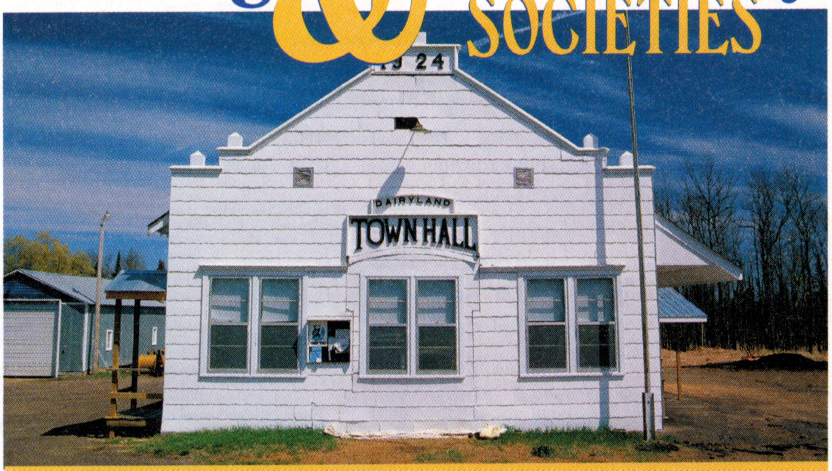
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CHECK BACK OFTEN!

Digging Deeper

Lineage & Hereditary Societies



by Laura G. Prescott

Think back to the days before genealogy became an interest of yours, to a time when ancestors occupied occasional family stories, were visited on Memorial Day cemetery trips, or brushed through your subconscious if Ellis Island or a Civil War battle was mentioned. Do you remember a time when your parents or grandparents talked about DAR family members or showed you a medal from a great uncle's link to an early pioneer society? Do you wish now that you could touch that medal again or hear that story just one more time because now it really means something to you?

Many of our relations were often proud members of lineage and hereditary societies. It may seem old-fashioned, but today's family historians also aspire to link themselves to early or special populations in many parts of the country. In fact, the variety of organizations we can join today by proving a relationship has expanded to such an extent that it would be difficult not to find something pertinent to your heritage.

If you think lineage societies are stuck-in-the-mud relics of genealogy's past, think again. Not only are lineage and heritage societies growing in popularity, they are keeping pace with modern genealogical standards. Linking your family into one may even make you a better genealogist because membership requirements have in many instances become more strict and an emphasis on rules of evidence is now standard procedure. Your grandmother may have written dates and names in her DAR application with little supporting evidence but today you must back up each link with primary documentation.

In most instances, there are two things you need to prove in order to be admitted into a lineage society: 1) proof of your ancestor's qualification (soldier, early settler, ethnic heritage, religious affiliation), and 2) your direct relationship to him or her with birth, death, and marriage dates documented for each generation. Unless you are an exceptionally well-organized genealogist, when it is time to organize your records you may discover an undocumented link, unverified birth, or something significant you've simply overlooked, sending you scurrying back to a library or county courthouse for proof.

In addition to compelling you to clean up your research documents, applying to a lineage group is a great way to put your relationships into perspective and separate family groups into understandable packages. You can find more specific details on how to best prepare a submission by reading the chapter "Lineage Papers," in *Professional Genealogy* (GPC, 2001), edited by Elizabeth Shown Mills. The chapter is written by Mary McCampbell Bell and Elisabeth Whitman Schmidt and is an excellent resource for understanding how to prepare a quality application. While directed at professional genealogists assisting others, it includes effective suggestions for anyone who could use a little professional insight and encouragement.

What Are Lineage Societies?

Grahame Thomas Smallwood, Jr., wrote a chapter in *The Source* (Ancestry, 1997) titled "Tracking Through Hereditary and Lineage Organizations." In it he lists several classifications for hereditary societies: war societies, early settler and ship societies, nationality (ethnic) societies, religious societies, royal and baronial societies, and family organizations.

Of these, family organizations are generally the least stringent in requiring you to prove your connection to the immigrant or famous ancestor, but the others require thorough evidence. Smallwood includes examples of various lineage applications and a good list of today's most prevalent organizations and how to apply to them. Another good resource is the *Hereditary Society Blue Book* (1994), edited by Robert R. Davenport. Keep in mind that some organizations are

by invitation only, which is sometimes simply a formality but necessary nonetheless.

If you don't have a family connection to the *Mayflower* or the Revolutionary War, it doesn't mean there isn't an organization suitable to your lineage. There are dozens, if not hundreds, of hereditary societies within the United States and around the world. An additional list can be found online at <www.cyndislist.com>. Within the Societies and Groups links are breakout links for fraternal organizations and lineage societies. And within the lineage section, there are further subsections for early American, first families and pioneers, military, and locality specific organizations. Cyndi's List will be useful in locating a hereditary society to which you might apply.

Some organizations may be narrowly defined like the Society of the Descendants of Washington's Army at Valley Forge. Was your ancestor on the field of Runnemede when the Magna Charta was signed in June 1215? If so, you may wish to consider the National Society Magna Charta Dames and Barons. The DAR (officially the National Society of the Daughters of the American Revolution) may be considered the "granddaddy" of all American lineage societies. At 204,000 members, it is the largest and perhaps most well-known.

Early colonial societies go as far back as Jamestown and the *Mayflower*, yet pioneer groups can cover time periods as recent as the Idaho Genealogical Society's Oregon Trail Certificate (1811–1911), the Red River Valley Genealogical Society Pioneer Certificate Program (North Dakota prior to 2 November 1889), or the First Families of the Twin Territories (Oklahoma prior to 16 November 1907).

In the last century many people, including my grandmother, dabbled in genealogy for the sole purpose of lineage society affiliation. To become a DAR member was trendy in the early part of the twentieth century, probably because applicants actually knew a grandparent whose grandfather fought in the war. My grandmother, her sisters, and many of her female cousins have DAR medallions next to their tombstones. The soldiers they link to have soldier medallions at their sites as well. It is a great tribute to the DAR chapters around the country that they manage so well in marking grave sites and keeping the links evident, in addition to the many other services they provide to genealogists and members.



After all my efforts, I was surprised to realize that successfully completing the requirements and receiving my letter of approval has become one of the most rewarding experiences I've encountered in genealogy.

My interest in lineage societies peaked when I discovered two direct lines of pioneers settled in the Western Reserve in Ohio as early as 1799. The union of the two families shortly thereafter was one of the first marriages in that region and, fortunately for me, was documented in the early record books. Their stories are recorded in county histories and embody the westward migrating spirit. I felt compelled to learn more about them. When I learned that the Ohio Genealogical Society has a hereditary society called the First Families of Ohio (FFO) I wanted to belong. My mission was simple, or so I thought.

As a genealogist, I pride myself on thorough documentation, but as soon as I started organizing my records for the FFO, I realized some of my source materials were insufficient. I was sure I only needed to go to my files and make copies of all the documentation I'd copied and recorded over the years. I discovered instead that my notes relied on hearsay sources to a larger extent than I realized. It took two trips to Ohio, long-distance research assistance, numerous e-mails, and a lot of discipline on my part to complete my application. I have to confess that my most glaring blunder in documentation was a missing marriage record—for my parents! It was easily resolved but an embarrassing oversight nonetheless. After all my efforts, I was surprised to realize that successfully completing the requirements and receiving my letter of approval has become one of the most rewarding experiences I've encountered in genealogy.

How to Do It

First of all, if you have an ancestor who is already on the rolls of a society, you may only need to prove your descent from that person. However, if the application had no attached documentation, as was often the case, you can only use that application for clues to help you coordinate and submit your own work.

Familiarize yourself first with the forms and information you'll be required to provide. Many society websites offer downloadable applications in PDF format. The forms can be overwhelming when you first look at them. They're not like pedigree charts with neat boxes, but they generally include one section with a lot of blank lines to

prove relationships with another section for your qualifying ancestor's information. It is wise to go through several rough drafts of your work before you complete your final submission. Neatness and organization count. You will also need copies of each piece of supporting evidence, including birth, death, marriage records, deeds, wills, and census data—whatever proves your relationship and is considered appropriate evidence by the society to which you are applying.

Amy Johnson Crow, chair of First Families of Ohio, relates that the most common reason an application is denied is lack of acceptable evidence. As an example, an applicant often assumes that "heir" indicates a parent/child relationship when, indeed, it does not. Additionally, if your submission relies upon a residency requirement, be careful to understand what qualifies. As is often the case in land transactions, the landowner may simply be an investor, not a resident. Additional proof is necessary if residency is a requirement.

Many genealogists rely heavily upon the published genealogy of a particular family, but it will not qualify as proof of descent in a lineage society. Simply because you can prove a relationship to someone in a published genealogy doesn't mean the author of that genealogy will prove the rest of your descent for you. Granted, in some cases, you will find a well-documented genealogy from which you can accumulate the sources yourself and add them to your application, but most of us know that many genealogies are undocumented and therefore impossible to prove or use beyond providing clues that we can then use to follow up.

Start Your Own

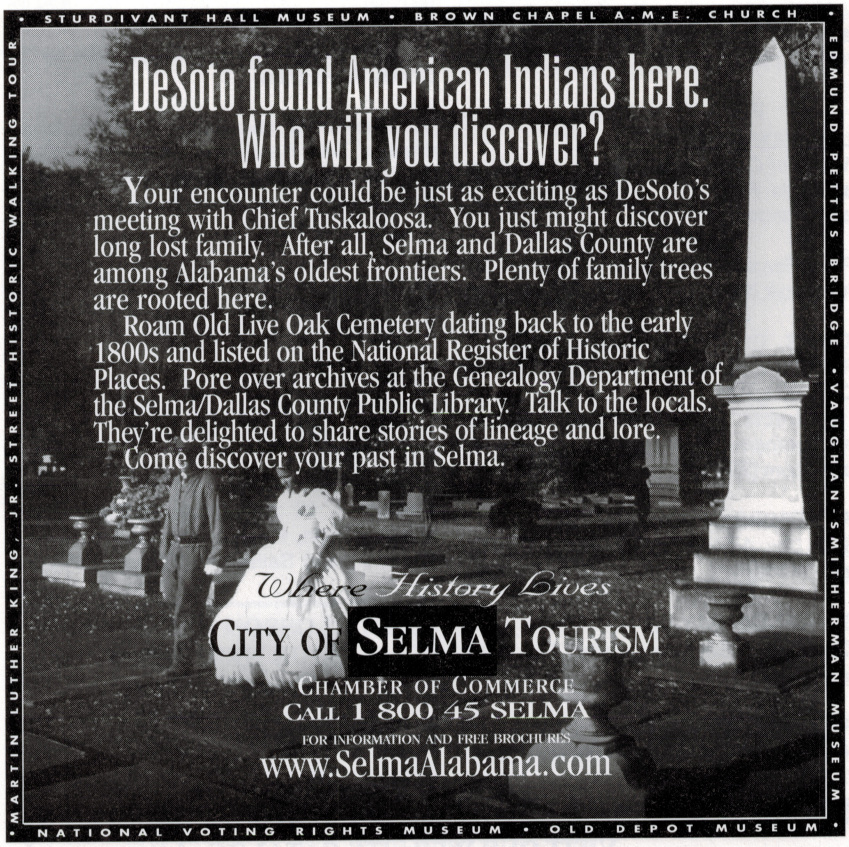
Genealogical and historical societies can benefit by introducing a lineage society to their organizational structure. By creating a well-regarded certificate or similar incentive, the society will increase membership as it is usually mandatory to belong to the society awarding the designation. Additionally, such a program will build a society's genealogical and historical collections as each application is then placed within the society's archives for the benefit of present and future researchers.

Need Help?

Many professional genealogists assist with lineage applications. Check for specialties among the names on the Board for Certification of Genealogists website at <www.bcgcertification.org> or the Association of Professional Genealogists site at <www.apgen.org/directory/index.php>. It is also worthwhile to contact the organizations to which you are applying and request names of professional genealogists who can help.

If you're not quite ready to apply to a lineage society but want to test your skills, choose an ancestor several generations back and create your own fictional society, maybe something like the Benevolent Society of Early Hudson River Fur Traders. Find evidence that your ancestor was a fur trader along the upper Hudson River according to the criteria you've set yourself, establish each direct connection in your line (birth, death, marriage), and then meticulously check your work. You may be surprised at the thoroughness of your research techniques, or you may be humbled into knowing that you need to become a better researcher. In any event, it is an experience from which every family historian can learn.

Laura G. Prescott is the educational services coordinator for the New England Historic Genealogical Society.



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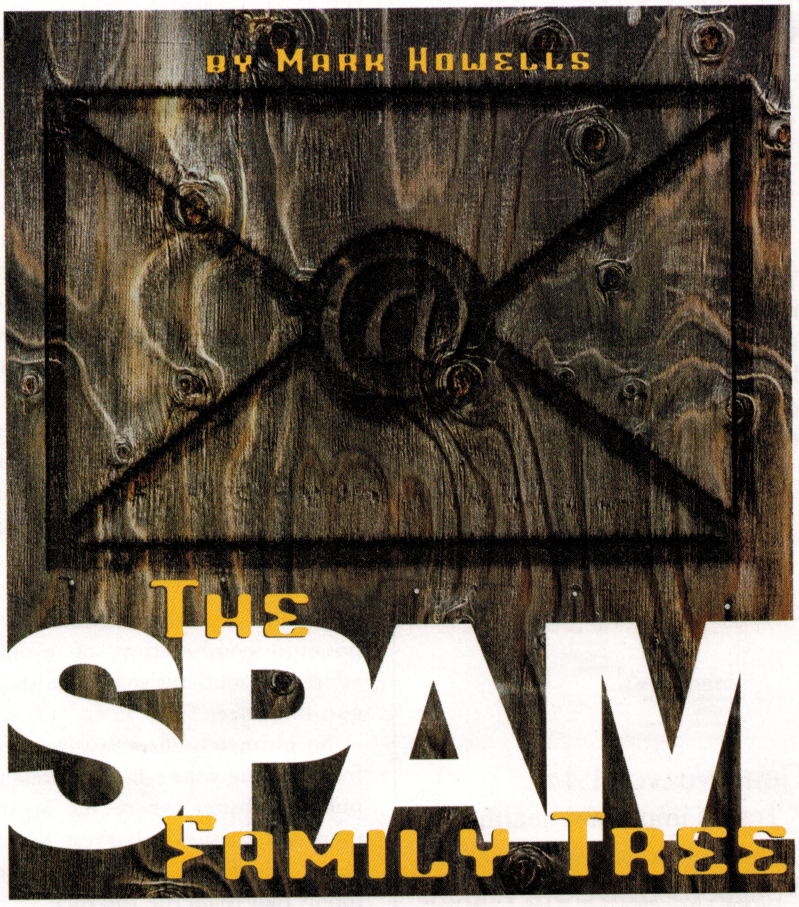
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Door-to-door salesmen, postal junk mail, and telephone solicitors interrupting your dinner are just a few of the regrettably famous ancestors of spam e-mail.

What Is Spam E-mail?

Spam e-mail is generally defined as unwanted, and usually commercial, e-mail. Unwanted is of course in the mind of the receiver; you might not be interested in the world's smallest digital camera, but I might. None of us are interested in a fraudulent Nigerian money laundering scheme.

There is nothing new about spam. It has been around for years. Media reports and personal experience indicate that spam is becoming more and more prevalent now. Estimates indicate that spam takes up as much as 40 percent of all e-mail traffic, and that percentage continues to grow. My personal mailbox does not yet bear out that statistic, but I do seem to be getting more spam lately.

Another indication that spam is more of a problem these days is that America Online is now blocking around more than 700 million pieces of spam e-mail each day. That's 100 million more e-mails than it actually delivers to intended recipients each day. Besides the nuisance factor to hundreds of millions of Internet users, the fear is that spam e-mail may completely overwhelm the Internet itself. Users will give up on e-mail as spam "crowds out" legitimate e-mail. Is a communications resource of any value when 99 out of every 100 messages are not of interest to their receiver? This hasn't happened yet, but it is a possibility.

There Ought to Be a Law

Some twenty-seven states now have laws against spam. Definitions of what constitutes spam differ between states and the remedies against spam are different in each state as well. There is hope of a national law against spam in the United States but as the common Nigerian money transfer fraud shows, spam knows no national borders. Legislation and international agreements against spam would be helpful but not a perfect solution.

Spam is simple to generate. With almost no entry costs, millions of pieces of spam can be churned out in minutes. Spam software is freely downloadable from the Internet, target "customers" are cheap at a few dollars per million addresses, and finding a compliant Internet Service Provider who doesn't care what you send out is easy. One estimate puts the level of successful return on an investment in a spam mass mailing as requiring only one positive response per 100,000 e-mails. Postal junk mailers usually require a response rate of one in 100 to cover costs. Aside from the costs being negligible, the decentralized nature of the Internet means that even if national laws and international agreements prohibited spam, enforcement would be problematic. Obscurity techniques such as anonymous routing and forged message headers can make anti-spam efforts a needle-in-a-haystack exercise.

How Did the Spammers Find Me?

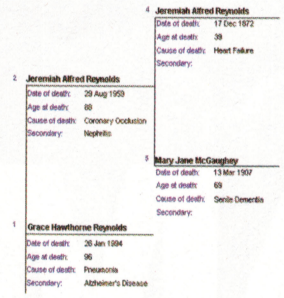
In the summer of 2002, researchers at the Center for Democracy and Technology set out to determine how

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spammers get target addresses. They set up 250 new, valid e-mail addresses and posted them on websites, mailing lists, newsgroups, etc. The e-mail addresses were submitted to job posting sites, online auctions, and other common locations for the use of an e-mail address. After six months of running the experiment, the researchers had received more than 10,000 pieces of spam. Of these, 97 percent were to e-mail addresses that were "harvested" off websites. The more popular the website, the more likely the e-mail address was to receive spam. The researchers received only twenty-five spam e-mails that resulted from sharing or selling e-mail addresses. They also noted that some spammers tried every possible combination of e-mail address to send out spam in a shotgun-like effect.

So ultimately most spam comes from posting your e-mail address to public websites where the spammers automatically harvest the e-mail addresses using software robots that roam the Internet.

These results are particularly troubling for family historians. We want our e-mail addresses to be available to others. We simply must use the Internet to leave our e-mail addresses on high-traffic websites. How else is our fourth cousin twice removed going to find us? Genealogy mailing lists on which we depend to interact with our fellow researchers are usually archived in web form. These archives can be harvested for e-mail addresses as well. What are family historians to do since they can't stop posting their e-mail addresses?

Technology Fixes

Internet Service Providers, software vendors, and other service vendors have recognized spam as a profitable problem to solve. There are now various services and products available that will attempt to filter spam out of incoming e-mail. The problem with such a technological fix is that it is not perfect. Most function based on a known "black list" of spammer source addresses or they filter keywords of common spam such as "Viagra." Neither of these filtering approaches can keep up with new or forged source addresses for spam or the creative permutations that spammers use to avoid the standard spelling of common spam topics.

The anti-spam technology that shows some promise of getting a few steps ahead of the spammers will actually monitor your e-mail activity and attempt to learn your interests. It then applies filtering rules to eliminate e-mails on subjects you're not likely to be interested in. This technology is not yet mature but could turn out to be a solution in the future.

If you are going to use a spam filter, it is very important that you keep control of it. This means that you understand exactly what it is filtering and that you are checking up on what it throws away. It is up to you to ensure that your spam filter is not discarding legitimate messages mis-identified as spam. This is a particular concern when you are first fine tuning your anti-spam filter. Don't send the suspected spam directly to electron heaven. Send it to a temporary holding file first and inspect it before permanently deleting it. You don't want your favorite genealogy mailing list to suddenly be considered spam due to your overzealous filters. Also, if you subscribe to an anti-spam service where the filters are not under your control, you will want to check your discards before deleting them. If the service suddenly changes the



filtering on your e-mail, Cousin Judy's e-mails may no longer be getting through to you.

I use my e-mail software to filter a good deal of the spam I get each day. My e-mail address has been very publicly exposed for eight years now and approximately 20 percent of my incoming daily e-mail is spam. My e-mail software filters—the same ones I use to sort my desired mail into appropriate mail boxes—simply filters e-mails with spam characteristics to a holding mail box until I review them and trash them. I don't have to see my spam unless I choose to.

Good on Sandwiches

Spam doesn't have to be made into a big deal. Your delete key is ideal for handling the problem. One method of avoiding spam that I have seen is by obscuring your e-mail address so it is not readable by the software robots that harvest e-mail addresses. For example, "markhow@oz.net" would become "markhow at oz dot net." This works so long as you have the ability to explain what you've done to your address. If you don't have the space or opportunity to describe your obscuring technique, Cousin Judy might be just as confused as the harvesting software robot. That defeats the purpose of using your address on the Internet. An extreme form of this behavior is when people put in an obscured e-mail address in their "Reply To" section of their e-mail headers. This prevents successfully sending a reply without changing the e-mail address and makes the solution more painful than the problem it purports to solve. I would never burden my correspondents with having to decode my e-mail address merely because I was tired of hitting the delete key. That's not how we genealogists treat one another.

And yes, there is actually a Spam family tree online at <www.spam.com/sp.htm>. It is, however, of the meat product variety of Spam® which unwillingly lent its name to unwanted commercial e-mail.

Mark Howells prefers his Spam® fried at markhow@oz.net.

PASSENGER LISTS

Searches are now available of the following ports for your ancestor's arrival in America.

	Indexes to lists	Pass. Lists
New York City	1820-1948	1820-1940
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New Orleans	1813-1952	1820-1903
Misc. Atlantic & Gulf Ports	1820-1874	most avail.
San Francisco	1850-75,1893-1934	1850-1875
Galveston, TX	1896-1951	1896-1948
Gulfport, MS	1904-1954	-
New Bedford, MA	1875-99,1902-54	1902-1942
Portland, ME	1893-1954	1893-1943
Providence, RI	1911-1954	1911-1931
AL, FL, GA, SC	1890-1924	-
Charleston, SC	1820-1829	1820-1829
Savannah, GA	1890-1924	1906-1945
New England	1600's	1600's

Information given on lists generally includes ship's name, arrival date, passenger's names, age, sex, occupation, nationality, and sometimes literacy, destination, class of travel (first class, steerage, etc.), embarkation port, and on 1880's lists, sometimes place of birth!

Beginning about 1890: generally all of the above plus departure date, marital status, race, last residence, name and address of close relative or friend in homeland, how much money carried, whether ever in U.S. before, name and address of a relative or contact in the U.S., health, height, weight, hair and eye color, and from about 1920, planned length of stay and citizenship intentions!

Search fees: Index search: **$19.00** (one passenger / one port) or 3 ports for **$45.00**
Pass. List search **$17.00** (one list)

IMPORTANT:
Index search AND List search BOTH needed unless you already know name of ship and EXACT arrival date AND port. (If not found in index, List search fee will be refunded.) If port is unknown, I suggest a 3-port search beginning with the (larger) ports at the top of the list. Indexes are generally everyname (not just head of household).

If found on list, photocopies of pages from list showing passenger's name and ship's name will be provided along with cost quote for copy of entire list and for history of ship and shipping line, often including a picture of the ship!

Please provide passenger's name and approximate birth year, port(s) of entry to be searched, approximate arrival date, and any other identifying info., such as homeland, occupation, and names of family members accompanying the passenger.

"We have found many passengers missed by the new Ellis Island index. Please give us a try."

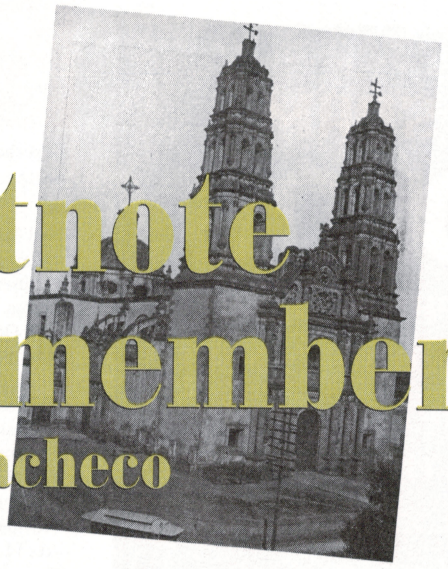
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Case Study

A Footnote to Remember

by Jaime Pacheco



Like many Mexican Americans in the United States, I was instilled with the importance of appreciating my genealogical past at an early age. My parents made sure to communicate to me the stories of our family and made me proud to be part of a continuous family chain that has existed in the Americas since the late 1500s.

My ancestors come from the present north central Mexican state of Chihuahua and lived in that part of the Western Hemisphere for well over four hundred years. My research has allowed me to document my family's presence there for the past twelve generations. It has been an unbelievable journey researching the history of my family through its documented past, particularly when I sought to locate my seventh great-grandfather Captain Antonio de Villalva's most important and very elusive last will and testament. This would never have been possible if it were not for the Spanish colonial government's obsession with record keeping.

For some time I had been trying to find my ancestor's will in the hope that it would shed new light on his very productive life and tie together other details that I had already found.

Captain Antonio de Villalva had been one of the founding settlers that arrived at the mining settlement of San Francisco de Cuéllar in the early eighteenth century. Most of these early settlers had arrived when the first silver mines were discovered in the area.



Map of the State of Chihuahua showing the location of some of the towns and bordering states.

These discoveries drew many settlers to the area where they also established several silver refining haciendas that sprouted along the confluence of the two rivers, Chuvíscar and Sacramento. The intersection of these two rivers became the site of the Real de San Francisco de Cuéllar. The town continued to grow in size and by 1 October 1718 it was elevated it to the status of a villa, and was then given the official name of the Villa of San Felipe el Real de Chihuahua.

In attempting to track down my ancestor, I had learned that upon arriving at San Francisco de Cuéllar in the early 1700s, de Villalva had established friendships and business relationships with many of the early founders of the area. The contacts he fostered allowed me to confirm his existence within the town. This provided me with an important navigational tool in the search for a possible testament he might have left behind.

With some persistent effort, I managed to locate the proof that he had indeed written one. Antonio's death record, dated 21 April 1723, states that he was buried with a high mass in the local church of the Villa de San Felipe el Real and that he had left a testament that was to be executed according to his wishes.

Finding proof of the existence of this important document was a surprise. But I now knew that he had left a will and I was on the right track. But how and where would I be able to find his actual will? Did it even exist?

My next move was to plot a course of action. Just when I had begun to make a concerted effort in trying to gather information on the possible location of his will, and realizing how difficult a task this might become, my luck changed.

On many occasions I had discussed my family history with my good friend LeRoy Anthony Reaza, who was a fellow researcher and a longtime mem-

ber of my genealogical association. He also happened to have ancestral ties to those early settlers of the Villa; two of his ancestors had held important positions on the Villa's first town council.

By coincidence, I had previously found evidence that confirmed the fact that our ancestors knew each other. As a result of his extensive knowledge of colonial Chihuahua, and his assorted and unique collection of books, the mystery of the location of Captain Antonio de Villalva's testament was finally resolved.

The key to my ancestor's will was in a book I borrowed from LeRoy. It was a small, thin paperback with photographs entitled *La Catedral de Chihuahua* (The Cathedral of Chihuahua), written by Dr. Clara Bargellini. The book chronicled the general history of the Cathedral of Chihuahua from its founding and included detailed analysis of its architectural designs and the many important artifacts that were found within the cathedral. As I looked through it, I happened to come across a brief description of a carved life-size black wooden statue known as the Santo Cristo de Mapimí (Holy Christ of Mapimí).

A silver and gold plated crown was permanently mounted on the statue's head and contained three symbolic spikes that represented the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. The story associated with this Black Christ figure (which is currently displayed on an altarpiece in one of the main chapels in the cathedral) is said to have originated in the late 1600s.

The statue was found when a group of Spanish soldiers battled a large group of Salinero Indians that inhabited a dry, desolate area located southeast from the jurisdiction of Chihuahua. The figure came to symbolize the Spaniards' determination and unwavering faith that they believed helped lead them to their victory over the hostile tribal Indians.

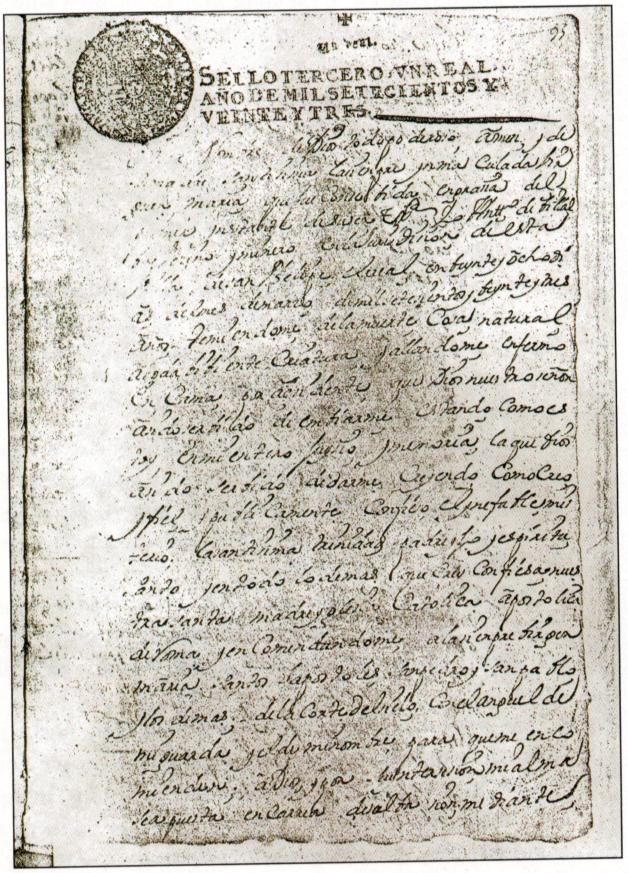
It was from there that this Black Christ was first brought to the parish of Santa Rosa de Cusihuiriáchic in the late 1690s and was subsequently relocated to the first primitive church of San Francisco de Cuéllar about 1715. This small church would eventually become the present-day Cathedral of Chihuahua.

At the end of the description was a tiny footnote and reference that provided me with the most definitive clue to date. The answer appeared at the bottom of the page in this simple phrase, "In 1723 Antonio de Villalva left in his testament 'to create a silver and gold plated crown of the three potentates for the Christ of Mapimí.' Might possibly be the one he still has. Protocol 1-1-2, ANCh (Notarial Archive of Chihuahua), f.91-91v." (translation).

At long last and after many exhaustive hours of intensive searching for the proverbial needle in the haystack, I had finally read the exact reference citation I had hoped for.

The first thought that came to mind was to find a way to contact the author of the book, Dr. Clara Bargellini. Since she had cited and quoted from my ancestor's testament, I felt there was a chance she may have seen the entire document and might know how to obtain a copy. At this stage, the only task I had in mind was to track her down and hope that she would be the answer to my search.

Knowing that Dr. Bargellini had published several books, I went to the Internet and executed multiple searches to find an e-mail address where I might be able to contact her. After several unsuccessful attempts, I finally managed to find her contact information.


SELLO TERCERO VN REAL.
AÑO DE MIL SETECIENTOS Y
VEINTE Y TRES.

The front page of the Testament of Captain Antonio de Villalva

Dr. Clara Bargellini is at present a professor at the Institute of Aesthetic Research at the National Autonomous University of Mexico. She has written various books and articles on the colonial art and history of Northern Mexico. Having found her e-mail address, I was excited to think that I might actually be able to contact her. I knew that my letter would have to capture her attention immediately; otherwise there was a chance she would disregard it since she didn't

know who I was. While writing my letter one late afternoon and including every relevant bit of detail in an attempt to attract her interest, I never imagined that by the following morning I would have a response from her.

Her e-mail was enthusiastic and included everything that I was seeking. She expressed her surprise at having received an e-mail from an individual in Los Angeles who had ties to a specifically referenced footnote she had published fifteen years earlier. She knew how much it meant to me to be able to obtain a copy of my ancestor's will and assured me that she would do everything possible to help me.

She wrote, "I don't want to get your hopes up too much, but I may actually have a copy of it. I did the Chihuahua book quite a few years ago, as you know, but I have kept documents and notes. I will need to go through them, of course, so it may not be too quick. But I shall make an effort to look for it. If I do not have it, I am sure I can help you get it."

At long last, it seemed that I would be achieving the goal I had set out to fulfill. As luck would have it, I did not have to wait long for her reply. Slightly more than one week later, she wrote to me and stated that she had a complete copy of Captain Antonio de Villalva's testament dated 31 March 1723.

After fifteen years of collecting dust in one of her many archival boxes, it would once again surface onto the stage of the new millennium. Dr. Bargellini offered to enlarge it for easier readability and to send it to me via FedEx within the week. I was on cloud nine and in complete astonishment.

Sure enough, within a week of receiving that memorable e-mail, I had her FedEx package in hand with its all-important contents—my seventh great-grandfather Captain Antonio de Villalva's testament!

It is a thorough document comprising more than thirty pages of invaluable information concerning his family, religious devotion, funeral rites, property, and business relationships. It has also afforded me the opportunity to dispel as well as confirm some of the many theories I had proposed concerning my ancestor's rewarding life.

Family ancestral documents such as testaments are often rare and very difficult to locate. Finding and obtaining a copy of a much desired and obscure record is the ultimate gift that anyone can expect to receive when every single piece of the investigative puzzle is finally put in place. It is quite an extraordinary and momentous event to be able to view and read a signed document that pertained to an ancestor who died nearly three hundred years ago.

Jaime Pacheco, a native of East Los Angeles, California, is an independent genealogical researcher and historian specializing in colonial Northern Mexico. He recently contributed to La Herencia *magazine and is presently co-authoring an article on the early years of the first colonial town council of the city of Chihuahua, Mexico.*

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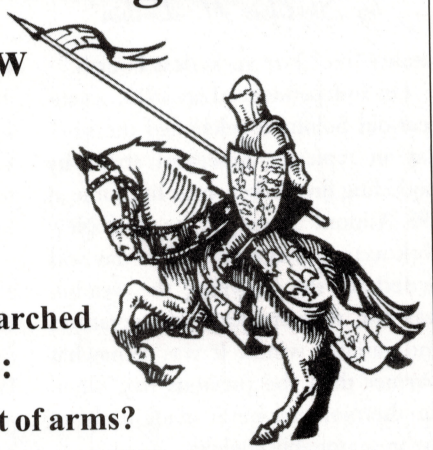
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Bare Bones

Firecrackerless Fourth

by Sheldon H. Laskin

I learned the bare outlines of the tragedy from a distant cousin. My great-uncle Solomon Laskin was fatally injured as a child while lighting firecrackers with his brothers on the Fourth of July. Cemetery records provided the date of death, and the death certificate confirmed that the nature of the injuries was consistent with the family story. The Ellis Island website provided family ship arrival records—and revealed how brief a time the boy's father knew his son. But these facts failed to make the story come to life.

Solomon had not even been born when his father, Louis, left Tomashpol, a tiny Russian shtetl near Odessa, to come to the United States in October 1906. Solomon's oldest brother Abraham, then nineteen years old, followed in June of the next year. It would take five years for Louis and Abraham to earn enough money to pay for the rest of the family to join them in the United States. The *Nieuw Amsterdam*, a Holland-America Line steamship from Rotterdam, arrived in New York harbor on 23 September 1912, and Louis finally met his five-year-old son who was born three months after he left Russia.

Solomon's mother, Eva, his brothers, Samuel and Morris, and his sister, Rose, were also onboard the *Nieuw Amsterdam*. Another brother, Isidore, immigrated on his own, also in 1912. With the arrival of Eva and the children, the family had every reason to believe that their lives as an American family were only just beginning.

What was the Fourth of July in 1914 like in Brooklyn, New York? Research in the *Brooklyn Daily Eagle*—the famous newspaper Walt Whitman wrote for—helped to put the accident in context. The results of that research revealed a sad irony: the City of New York, apparently unaware of Solomon Laskin's fatal accident, had publicly congratulated itself for a fatality-free "Firecrackerless Fourth."

On Independence Day 1914, seven-year-old Solomon celebrated the holiday in typically American style—by exploding firecrackers near his home at 198 Ashford Street, in the East New York section of Brooklyn. The day was perfect for the festivities; the weather was fair, with moderate temperatures and variable winds. It was somewhat warmer than the previous day, when the thermometer never made it out of the unseasonably cool 60s.

As he had done many times previously, Solomon lit a large firecracker and covered it with a garbage can to enhance the force of the explosion. Moving away a safe distance, he waited. But the garbage can had filled with smoke from previous blasts and starved the firecracker of the oxygen it required. When nothing happened, Solomon removed the garbage can, exposing the firecracker to the air. The force of the blast caught him in the left foot.

New York City Fire Commissioner Robert Adamson was quoted in the *Brooklyn Daily Eagle* of 3 July 1914, proclaiming 4 July 1914 to be a "Firecrackerless Fourth" and warning that anyone violating the city's anti-fireworks ordinance would be liable to arrest and a $5 fine for each offense. Adamson took this issue very seriously. In his pamphlet *Fire Is a Great Servant But A Terrible Master,* he urged banning Fourth of July fireworks and bonfires entirely, noting that "more people have been killed in recent years on the Fourth of July celebration than were killed in the whole original revolution that it celebrates. Nearly 40,000 were killed or injured in Fourth of July fires in the ten years, 1904 to 1914."

The city tried very hard to enforce the ordinance. The 5 July 1914 *Eagle* reported that a local storekeeper, Isidore Schwartz, was arrested on the 4th in the Brownsville section of the borough and charged with selling fireworks to a child as well as attempting to bribe Policeman Neary by offering him $2 to look the other way.

Also on July 5th, the *Eagle* proclaimed Brooklyn's "firecrackerless Fourth" to have been a complete success and the quietest Independence Day in Brooklyn's history. The newspaper noted that there had been no holiday-related casualties, and that only ten accidents occurred, "all of which were of a minor character." Among the victims were two children who were hurt by exploding blank cartridges and one child who was burned by a firecracker. The article does not indicate whether Solomon Laskin was one of these children.

Solomon didn't have the benefit of penicillin in 1914 and over the next three days, his wounds became infected and festered. He was admitted to King's County Hospital on July 7th, suffering from acute osteomyletis of the left foot and septicemia. He died on July 12th. The *Brooklyn Daily Eagle* apparently did not follow up on the story and never noted that its proclamation of "complete success" was premature.

The Fourth of July is the quintessential American holiday. And for a Russian Jewish immigrant family, the holiday should have been a source of pleasure in their newfound freedom and in the reunion of their family after six years of separation. But with the tragic loss of young Solomon, the two years in America were all they would have as a complete family.

Sheldon H. Laskin, an attorney living in Baltimore, Maryland, has been researching his family history for the past three years. He thanks his cousin Jack Laskin for telling him Solomon's story.

DISCOVER

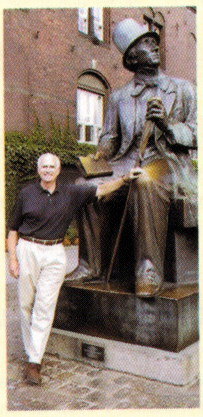
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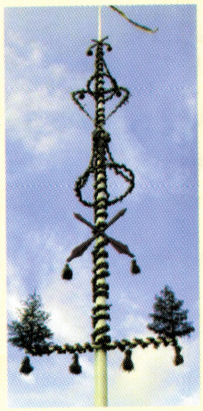


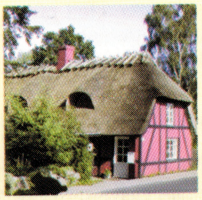


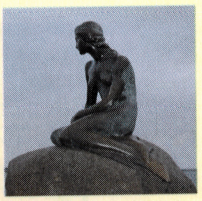



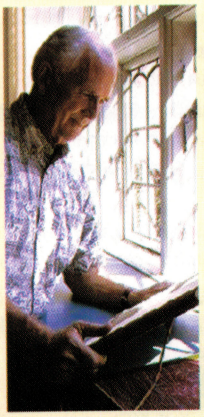

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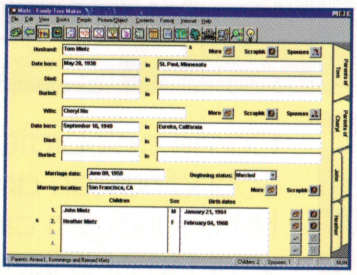


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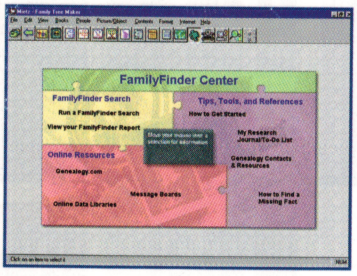
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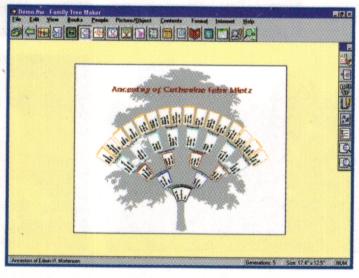
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